A

DIALOGUE CONCERNING ORATORY,

OR THE CAUSES

OF CORRUPT ELOQUENCE.[1]

1. You have often inquired of me, Justus Fabius,[2] why it is, that while ancient times display a race of great and splendid orators, the present age, divested of all claim to the praise of oratory, has scarcely retained even the name. By the appellation of orator we now distinguish none but those who flourished in a former period; while the eminent speakers of the present day are styled pleaders, advocates, patrons, in short, everything but orators.

The inquiry is in its nature delicate; tending, if we are not able to vie with antiquity, to impeach our genius, and if we are not willing, to arraign our judgment. An answer to so nice a question is more than I should venture to undertake, were I to rely altogether upon myself: but it happens, that I am able to state the sentiments of men distinguished by their eloquence, such as it is in modern times; having, in the early part of my life, been present at their conversation on the very subject now before us. What I have to offer, will not be the result of my own thinking: it is the work of memory only; a mere recital of what fell from the most celebrated orators of their time: men who thought with subtlety, and expressed themselves with energy and precision; each, in his turn, assigning different but probable causes, at times insisting on the same, and, in the course of the debate, maintaining his

[1] The scene of the following Dialogue is laid in the sixth year of Vespasian, A. U. C. 828, A. D. 75.

[2] Justus Fabius was consul A. U. C. 864, A. D. 111. But as he did not begin the year, his name does not appear in the Fasti Consulares.

own proper character, and the peculiar cast of his mind. What they said upon the occasion, I shall relate, as nearly as may be, in the style and manner of the several speakers, observing always the regular course and order of the controversy. For a controversy it certainly was, where the speakers of the present age did not want an advocate, who supported their cause with zeal, and, after treating antiquity with severity, and even derision, assigned the palm of eloquence to modern times.

2. Curiatius Maternus[1] gave a public reading of his tragedy of Cato. On the following day a report prevailed, that the piece had given umbrage to the men in power. The author, it was said, had laboured only to enhance the character of his hero, regardless of himself. This soon became the topic of public conversation. Maternus received a visit from Marcus Aper[2] and Julius Secundus,[3] then the first ornaments

[1] Concerning Maternus, nothing is known with any kind of certainty. Dio relates that a sophist of that name was put to death by Domitian, for a school declamation against tyrants; but not one of the commentators ventures to assert that he was the Curiatius Maternus who makes so conspicuous a figure in the Dialogue before us.

[2] No mention is made of Marcus Aper, either by Quintilian or Pliny. It is supposed that he was father of Marcus Flavius Aper, who was substituted consul A.U.C. 883, A.D. 130. His oratorical character, and that of Secundus, as we find them drawn in this section, are not unlike what we are told by Cicero of Crassus and Antonius. Crassus, he says, was not willing to be thought destitute of literature, but he wished to have it said of him, that he despised it, and preferred the good sense of the Romans to the refinements of Greece. Antonius, on the other hand, was of opinion that his fame would rise to greater magnitude, if he was considered as a man wholly illiterate, and void of education. In this manner they both expected to increase their popularity; the former by despising the Greeks, and the latter by not knowing them. Cicero, De Orat. ii. 1.

[3] Quintilian makes honourable mention of Julius Secundus, who, if he had not been prematurely cut off, would have transmitted his name to posterity among the most celebrated orators. He would have added, and he was daily doing it, whatever was requisite to complete his oratorical genius: and all that could be desired was more vigour in argument, and more attention to matter and sentiment than to the choice of words. But he died too soon, and his fame was, in some degree, intercepted. (Quintil. x. 1.) It is remarkable that Quintilian, in his list of Roman orators, has neither mentioned Maternus nor Marcus Aper. The Dialogue, for that reason, cannot properly be ascribed to him: men who figure so much in the inquiry concerning oratory, would not have been omitted by the critic who thought their conversation worth recording.

of the forum. I was, at that time, a constant attendant on those eminent men; I heard them, not only in their courts of judicature, but, feeling an inclination to the same studies, I followed them with youthful ardour, in public and in private, to hear their familiar talk, their discussions, and the most intimate expression of their sentiments. True it is that by many it was captiously objected to Secundus, that he had no command of words, no flow of language; and to Aper, that he was indebted for his fame, not to art or literature, but to the natural powers of a vigorous understanding. The truth is, the style of the former was remarkable for its purity; concise, yet sufficiently free and copious: and the latter was well versed in general erudition. It might be said of him, that he despised literature, not that he wanted it. He thought, perhaps, that, by scorning the aid of letters, and by drawing altogether from his own fund, his fame would stand on a more solid foundation.

3. We went together to pay our visit to Maternus. Upon entering his study, we found him with the tragedy, which he had read on the preceding day, lying before him. Secundus began:—Are you then so little affected by the censure of malignant critics, as to persist in cherishing this obnoxious tragedy of yours? Perhaps you are revising the piece, and, after retrenching certain passages, intend to send your Cato into the world, in, I will not say an improved, but certainly a safer form.—There lies the poem, said Maternus; you may peruse it, if you think proper; you will find it just the same as when you heard it read. If Cato has omitted anything, Thyestes,[1] at my next reading, shall supply the deficiency. I have formed the fable of a tragedy on that subject; the plan is warm in my imagination, and, that I may give my whole time to it, I now am eager to despatch an edition of Cato.—Marcus Aper interposed: Are you, indeed, so enamoured of your dramatic muse, as to renounce your oratorical character, and your forensic pursuits, in order to sacrifice all your time to—Medea, I think it was lately, and now to Thyestes? though, meanwhile, the causes of so many friends, and the interests of so many colonies and municipal cities, call you to the forum.[2] Surely these would give you more than sufficient

[1] Thyestes was a common and popular subject of ancient tragedy.

[2] It was the custom of the colonies and municipal towns to pay

employment, though you had not imposed upon yourself this new task, labouring to add Domitius[1] and Cato, that is to say, the incidents and characters of Roman story, to the fables of Greece.

4. The sharpness of that reproof, replied Maternus, would perhaps have disconcerted me, if, by frequent repetition, it had not lost its sting. To differ on this subject is grown familiar to us both. For you wage an incessant war against the poets; and I, who am charged with deserting my clients, have yet every day the cause of poetry to defend. I rejoice the more, therefore, that we have a person present, of ability to decide between us: a judge, who will either lay me under an injunction to write no more verses, or, as I rather hope, encourage me, by his authority, to renounce for ever the dry employment of forensic causes (in which I have had my share of drudgery), that I may, for the future, be at leisure to cultivate the more august and sacred eloquence of the tragic muse.

5. But I, said Secundus, before Aper refuses me as an umpire, will follow the example of all fair and upright judges, who, in particular cases, when they feel a partiality for one of the contending parties, desire to be excused from hearing the cause. The friendship and habitual intercourse which I have ever cultivated with Saleius Bassus,[2] that excellent man,

their court to some great orator at Rome, in order to obtain his patronage whenever they should have occasion to apply to the senate for a redress of grievances.

[1] Domitius was another subject of tragedy, taken from the Roman story. Who he was, does not clearly appear. Brotier thinks it was Domitius, the avowed enemy of Julius Cæsar, who moved in the senate for a law to recall that general from the command of the army in Gaul, and afterwards, on the breaking out of the civil war, fell bravely at the battle of Pharsalia. See Suetonius, Life of Nero, s. 2.

[2] Saleius Bassus is mentioned by Juvenal as an eminent poet in distress:—

> At Serrano tenuique Saleio
> Gloria quantalibet quid erit, si gloria tantum est?
> Sat. vii. 80.

> "But to poor Bassus what avails a name,
> To starve on compliments and empty fame!"—DRYDEN.

Quintilian says, he possessed a poetic genius, but so warm and vehement, that, even in an advanced age, his spirit was not under the control of sober judgment. This passage affords an insuperable argument against Lipsius, and the rest of the critics, who named Quintilian

and no less excellent poet, are well known: and let me add, if poetry is to be arraigned, I know no client that can offer such handsome bribes.

My business, replied Aper, is not with Saleius Bassus: let him, and all of his description, who, without talents for the bar, devote their time to the Muses, pursue their favourite amusement without interruption. But, since we are now before a competent judge, Maternus must not think to escape in the crowd. I single him out from the rest. I call upon him to answer, how it happens, that a man of his talents, formed by nature to reach the heights of manly eloquence, whereby he might at once both acquire friendships and support them, and have the glory to see whole provinces and nations rank themselves under his patronage, does yet thus renounce a pursuit of all others the most advantageous, whether considered with respect to interest or to honours; a pursuit that affords the most illustrious means of propagating a reputation, not only within our own walls, but throughout the whole compass of the Roman empire, and indeed to the most distant nations of the globe?

If utility ought to be the governing motive of every action and every design of our lives; can we possibly be employed to better purpose, than in the exercise of an art which enables a man, upon all occasions, to support the interest of his friend, to protect the rights of the stranger, to defend the cause of the injured, to strike with terror and dismay his open and secret adversaries, himself secure the while, and guarded, as it were, by an imperishable potency?

In the calm seasons of life, the true use of oratory is discerned in the protection of others. Have we reason to be alarmed for ourselves?—the sword and breastplate are not a better defence in the heat of battle. It is at once a buckler to cover yourself, and a weapon to brandish against your enemy. Armed with this, you may appear with courage before the tribunals of justice, in the senate, and even in the presence of the prince. What had Eprius Marcellus[1] to

as a candidate for the honour of this elegant composition. Can it be imagined that a writer of fair integrity would in his great work speak of Bassus as he deserved, and in the Dialogue overrate him beyond all proportion? Duplicity was not a part of Quintilian's character.

[1] Eprius Marcellus is often a conspicuous figure in the Annals and

oppose to the united resentment of the whole senate but his eloquence? Collected in himself, and looking terror to his enemies, he foiled Helvidius Priscus; a man, no doubt, of consummate wisdom, but unpractised and inexpert in contests of that kind. Such is the advantage of oratory: to enlarge upon it were superfluous. My friend Maternus will not dispute the point.

6. I proceed to the pleasure arising from the exercise of eloquence; a pleasure which does not consist in the mere sensation of the moment, but is repeated every day, and almost every hour. For let me ask, to a man of an ingenuous and liberal mind, who knows the relish of elegant enjoyments, what can yield such true delight, as to see his house always thronged by a concourse of the most distinguished persons; and to know that the honour is not paid to his money, or to his heirless condition,[1] or to his possession of a public office, but to his very self? The rich who have no issue, and the men in high rank and power, are his followers. Though he is still young, and probably destitute of fortune, all concur in paying their court to solicit his patronage for themselves, or to recommend their friends to his protection. In the most splendid fortune, in all the dignity and pride of power, is there anything that can equal the satisfaction of seeing the most illustrious citizens, men

History of Tacitus. To a bad heart he united the gift of eloquence. In the Annals (xvi. 28) he makes a vehement speech against Pætus Thrasea, and afterwards wrought the destruction of that excellent man. For that exploit he was attacked, in the beginning of Vespasian's reign, by Helvidius Priscus. In the History (iv. 7, 8) we see them both engaged in a violent contention. In the following year (823), Helvidius in the senate opened an accusation in form: but Marcellus, by using his eloquence as his buckler and his offensive weapon, was able to ward off the blow. He rose from his seat, and, "I leave you," he said, "I leave you to give the law to the senate: reign if you will, even in the presence of the prince." See Hist. iv. 43.

[1] To be rich and have no issue, gave to the person so circumstanced the highest consequence at Rome. All ranks of men paid their court to him. To discourage a life of celibacy, and promote population, Augustus passed a law, called *Papia Poppæa*, whereby bachelors were subjected to penalties. But marriage was not brought into fashion. In proportion to the rapid degeneracy of the manners under the emperors, celibacy grew into respect; insomuch that we find (Annals, xii. 52) a man too strong for his prosecutors, because he was rich, old, and childless: "Valuitque pecuniosa orbitate et senecta."

respected for their years, and flourishing in the opinion of the public, yet courting your assistance, and, in the midst of wealth and grandeur, fairly owning, that they still want something superior to all their possessions?

Then think, too, of the honourable crowd of clients conducting the orator from his house, and attending him in his return; what a glorious appearance he makes in public! what distinguishing respect is paid to him in the courts of judicature! with what exultation of heart he rises up before a full audience, hushed in solemn silence, and fixed attention, pressing round the admired speaker, and receiving every passion he deems proper to raise! Yet these are but the ordinary joys of eloquence, and visible to every common observer. There are others, and those far superior, of a more concealed and delicate kind, and of which the orator himself can alone be sensible. Does he stand forth prepared with a studied harangue? As the composition, so the pleasure, in this instance, is more solid and equal. Does he, on the other hand, rise not without a certain fluttering of spirit, in a new and unexpected debate? The very solicitude he has felt, enhances the pleasure of his success. Indeed the most exquisite satisfaction of this kind is, when he boldly hazards an unpremeditated speech. For it is in the productions of genius, as in the fruits of the earth; many things are sown and brought to maturity with toil and care, but those which spring up spontaneously are ever the most agreeable.

7. As to myself, if I may allude to my own feelings, the day on which I obtained the laticlave, and even the days when I, an obscure man, born in a city that did not favour my pretensions,[1] entered upon the offices of quæstor, tribune, and prætor, were not so joyful to me as those on which it befals me, with such little power of speech as I possess, to defend the accused; to argue successfully before the centumviri,[2] or, in the presence of the prince, to plead for his freed-

[1] Marcus Aper, Julius Secundus, and Curiatius Maternus, according to Brotier and others, were natives of Gaul. Aper (c. 10) mentions the Gauls as their common countrymen.

[2] All causes of a private nature were heard before the centumviri. Three were chosen out of every tribe, and the tribes amounted to five-and-thirty; so that, in fact, 105 were chosen: but, for the sake of a round number, they were called centumviri. The causes that were heard before that jurisdiction are enumerated by Cicero, De Orat. lib. i. 38.

men, and the procurators appointed by himself. Upon those occasions I seem to rise above the dignities of tribune, prætor, and consul; and feel within myself a grandeur that springs from no external cause, that is not conferred by patent, nor obtained by favour.

Where is the art or science, the renown of which can vie with the celebrity of a great orator? His fame does not depend on the opinion of thinking men, who attend to business and watch the administration of affairs; he is applauded by the youth of Rome, at least by such of them as are of a laudable disposition, and hope to rise by honourable means. Whose example do parents more recommend to their sons? Whom do the ignorant common people[1] oftener name, and point at as he passes by? The strangers, too, who arrive from all parts, are eager to behold the man of whom they have heard so much in their towns and colonies.

8. I will be bold to say that Eprius Marcellus, whom I have already mentioned, and Crispus Vibius,[2] (I cite living examples, in preference to the names of a former day,) are not less known in the remotest parts of the empire, than they are at Capua, or Vercellæ,[3] where, we are told, they were born; nor does either of them owe this extensive fame to his three hundred thousand sesterces, (though their eloquence may be

[1] The common people are called in the original, *tunicatus populus*, that is, as we should say, "the men in their shirt-sleeves," those who appeared in the streets in their under-garments (tunica) and without a toga.

[2] The character of Eprius Marcellus has been already stated, c. 5, note. Crispus Vibius is mentioned as a man of weight and influence, Annals, xiv. 28. Quintilian has mentioned him to his advantage: he calls him (v. 13) a man of agreeable and elegant talents, "vir ingenii jucundi et elegantis;" and again, Vibius Crispus was distinguished by the elegance of his composition, and the sweetness of his manner; a man born to please, but fitter for private suits than for the importance of public causes. (x. 1.)

[3] Which of these two men was born at Capua, and which at Vercellæ, is not clearly expressed in the original. Eprius Marcellus, who has been described of a prompt and daring spirit, ready to embark in every mischief, and by his eloquence able to give colour to the worst cause, must at this time have become a new man, since we find him mentioned in this Dialogue with unbounded praise. He, it seems, and Vibius Crispus were the favourites at Vespasian's court. Vercellæ, now Verceil, was situated in the eastern part of Piedmont. Capua, rendered famous by Hannibal, was a city in Campania, always deemed the seat of pleasure.

said to have built up their fortunes;) and, indeed, such is the divine power of eloquence, that in every age we have examples of men, who by their talents raised themselves to the summit of their ambition. But these, as I have already said, are recent instances; nor are we to glean an imperfect knowledge of them from tradition; they are every day before our eyes. The more abject the origin of these two men, and the more sordid the poverty in which they set out, the more brilliant illustration and proof do they afford of the advantages of oratory; since it is apparent, that, without birth or fortune, neither of them recommended by his moral character, and one of them deformed in his person, they have made themselves, for a series of years, the first men in the state. They were the first men in the forum as long as they chose to be so; now they are the first in Cæsar's friendship; they direct and govern all things, and the favour with which the prince regards them is little short of veneration. In fact, Vespasian, that venerable old prince, always open to the voice of truth, clearly sees that the rest of his favourites derive all their lustre from the favours which his munificence has bestowed: but with Marcellus and Crispus the case is different; they carry with them, as their recommendations, what no prince can give, and no subject can receive. Compared with the advantages which those men possess, what are family pictures, statues, busts, and titles of honour? Not that these things are without their value; it is with them as with wealth and honours, advantages against which you will easily find men who declaim, but none who in their hearts despise them. Hence it is, that in the houses of all who have distinguished themselves in the career of eloquence, we see titles, statues, and splendid ornaments, the reward of talents, and, at all times, the decorations of the great and powerful orator.

9. But to come to the point from which we started; poetry, to which my friend Maternus wishes to dedicate all his time, has none of these advantages. It confers no dignity, nor does it serve any useful purpose. It is attended with some pleasure, but it is the pleasure of a moment springing from vain applause, and bringing with it no solid advantage. What I have said, and am going to add, may probably, my good friend Maternus, be unwelcome to your ear; and yet I must

take the liberty to ask you, if Agamemnon[1] or Jason speaks in your piece with dignity of language, what useful consequence follows from it? What client has been defended? Who returns to his own house with a grateful heart? Our friend Saleius Bassus is, beyond all question, a poet of eminence, or, to use a warmer expression, he has the god within him: but who attends his levee? who seeks his patronage, or follows in his train? Should he himself, or his intimate friend, or his near relation, happen to be involved in a troublesome litigation, he would of course apply to his friend Secundus; or to you, Maternus; not because you are a poet, nor yet to obtain a copy of verses from you; of those he has a sufficient stock at home, elegant, it must be owned, and exquisite in their kind. But after all his labour and waste of genius, what is his reward?

When in the course of a year, after toiling day and night, he has brought a single poem to perfection, he is obliged to solicit his friends, and exert his interest, in order to bring together an audience[2] so obliging as to hear a recital of the

[1] Agamemnon and Jason were two favourite dramatic subjects with the Roman poets.

[2] Before the invention of printing, copies were not easily multiplied. Authors were eager to enjoy their fame, and the pen of the transcriber was slow and tedious. Public rehearsals were the road to fame. But an audience was to be drawn together by interest, by solicitation, and public advertisements. Pliny, in one of his letters, has given a lively description of the difficulties which the author had to surmount. "This year," he says, "has produced poets in great abundance. Scarce a day has passed in the month of April without the recital of a poem. But the greater part of the audience comes with reluctance; they loiter in the lobbies, and there enter into idle chat, occasionally desiring to know, whether the poet is in his pulpit? has he begun? is his preface over? has he almost finished? They condescended at last to enter the room; they looked round with an air of indifference, and soon retired, some by stealth, and others with open contempt. Hence the greater praise is due to those authors who do not suffer their genius to droop, but, on the contrary, amidst the most discouraging circumstances, still persist to cultivate the liberal arts." Pliny adds, that he himself attended all the public readings, and, for that purpose, stayed longer in the city than was usual with him. Being at length released, he intended, in his rural retreat, to finish a work of his own, but not to read it in public, lest he should be thought to claim a return of the civility which he had shown to others. He was a hearer, and not a creditor. The favour conferred, if re-demanded, ceases to be a favour. (Pliny, lib. i. epist. 13.) Such was the state of literature under the worst of the emperors. The Augustan age was over. In the reigns of Tiberius

piece. Nor can this be done without expense. A room must be hired, a stage or pulpit must be erected; benches must be arranged, and tickets distributed throughout the city. What if the reading succeeds to the height of his wishes? Pass but a day or two, and the whole harvest of praise and admiration fades away, like a flower that withers in its bloom, and never ripens into fruit. By the event, however flattering, he gains no friend, he obtains no patronage, nor does a single person go away impressed with the idea of an obligation conferred upon him. The poet has been heard with applause; he has been received with acclamations; and he has enjoyed a short-lived transport. We lately lauded it as an uncommon instance of generosity in Vespasian, that he made Saleius Bassus a present of fifty thousand sesterces. To deserve so distinguished a proof of the sovereign's esteem is, no doubt, highly honourable; but is it not still more honourable, if your circumstances require it, to serve yourself, to be your own benefactor, and to be the object of your own liberality? It must not be forgotten, that the poet who would produce anything excellent, must bid farewell to the conversation of his friends; he must renounce, not only the pleasures of Rome, but also the duties of social life; he must

and Caligula learning drooped, but in some degree revived under the dull and stupid Claudius. Pliny, in the letter above cited, says of that emperor, that, one day hearing a noise in his palace, he inquired what was the cause, and being informed that Nonianus was reciting in public, went immediately to the place, and became one of the audience. After that time letters met with no encouragement from the great. The poets who could not hope to procure an audience, haunted the baths and public walks, in order to fasten on their friends, and, at any rate, obtain a hearing for their works. Juvenal says, the plantations and marble columns of Julius Fronto resounded with the vociferation of reciting poets. (Sat. i. 12.) The same author observes, that the poet who aspired to literary fame might borrow a house for the purpose of a public reading; and the great man who accommodated the writer, might arrange his friends and freedmen on the back seats, with direction not to be sparing of their applause; but still a stage or pulpit, with convenient benches, was to be procured, and that expense the patrons of letters would not supply. (Sat. vii. 39.) Statius, in Juvenal's time, was a favourite poet. If he announced a reading, his auditors went in crowds. He delighted all degrees, all ranks of men; but, when the hour of applause was over, the author was obliged to sell a tragedy to Paris, the famous actor, in order to procure a dinner. (Sat. vii. 82.) This was the hard lot of poetry, and this the state of public reading, which Aper describes to his friend Maternus.

retire, as the poets say, "to groves and grottos," in other words, to solitude.

10. Fame even, which alone they worship, and which they confess to be the sole reward of all their toil, does not attend poets in the same degree as orators. The indifferent poet has no readers, the best but few. Let there be a reading of a poem by the ablest master of his art: will the fame of his performance reach all quarters, I will not say of the empire, but of Rome only? Among the strangers who arrive from Spain, from Asia, or from our Gaul, who inquires[1] after Saleius Bassus? Should it happen that there is one, who thinks of him, his curiosity is soon satisfied; he passes on, content with a transient view, as if he had seen a picture or a statue.

In what I have advanced, let me not be misunderstood: I do not mean to deter such as are not blessed with the gift of oratory, from the practice of their favourite art, if it serves to amuse their leisure, and gain them a degree of reputation. I am an admirer of all eloquence;[2] I hold it venerable, and even sacred, in all its departments; in solemn tragedy, of which you, Maternus, are so great a master; in the majesty of the epic, the gaiety of the lyric muse, the wanton elegy, the keen iambic, and the pointed epigram; all have their charms; and Eloquence, whatever may be the subject which

[1] Notwithstanding all that is said, in this Dialogue, of Saleius Bassus, does not appear, in the judgment of Quintilian, that he was a poet whose fame could extend itself to the distant provinces. Perfection in the kind is necessary. Livy the historian was at the head of his profession. In consequence of his vast reputation, we know from Pliny the consul, that a native of the city of Cadiz was so struck with the character of that great writer, that he made a journey to Rome, with no other intent than to see that celebrated genius; and having gratified his curiosity, without staying to view the wonders of that magnificent city, returned home perfectly satisfied. (Lib. ii. epist. 3.)

[2] In Homer and Virgil, as well as in the dramatic poets of the first order, we frequently have passages of real eloquence, with the difference which Quintilian mentions: "The poet," he says, "is a slave to the measure of his verse; and, not being able at all times to make use of the true and proper word, he is obliged to quit the natural and easy way of expression, and avail himself of new modes and turns of phraseology, such as tropes and metaphors, with the liberty of transposing words, and lengthening or shortening syllables, as he sees occasion." (Quintil. lib. x. 1.) The speaker in the Dialogue is aware of this distinction, and, subject to it, the various branches of poetry are with him so many different modes of eloquence.

she chooses to adorn, is in my mind to be preferred to all other arts. But this, Maternus, is no apology for you, who, formed by nature to reach the summit of perfection,[1] yet choose to wander into devious paths, and rest contented with a humble station in the vale beneath.

Were you a native of Greece, where to exhibit in the public games[2] is an honourable employment; and if the gods had bestowed upon you the force and sinew of the athletic Nicostratus,[3] do you imagine that I could tamely look on, and see

[1] The original has, "the citadel of eloquence," which calls to mind an admired passage in Lucretius:—

> Sed nil dulcius est bene quam munita tenere
> Edita doctrinâ sapientum templa serena,
> Despicere unde queas alios, passimque videre
> Errare, atque viam palantes quærere vitæ.—Lib. ii. 7.

[2] It is a fact well known, that in Greece the most illustrious of both sexes thought it honourable to exercise themselves in the exhibitions of the theatre, and even to appear in the athletic games. Plutarch, it is true, will have it, that all scenic arts were prohibited at Sparta by the laws of Lycurgus; and yet Cornelius Nepos assures us, that no Lacedemonian matron, however high her quality, was ashamed to act for hire on the public stage. He adds, that throughout Greece, it was deemed the highest honour to obtain the prize in the Olympic games; and no man blushed to be a performer in plays and pantomimes, and give himself a spectacle to the people. (Cor. Nep. in Præfat.) It appears, however, from a story told by Ælian, that the Greek women were by law excluded from the Olympic games. Whoever was found to transgress, or even to cross the river Alpheus, during the celebration of that great spectacle, was liable to be thrown from a rock. The consequence was, that not one female was detected, except Callipatria, or, as others called her, Pherenice. This woman, disguised in the habit of a teacher of gymnastic exercises, introduced her son, Pisidorus, to contend for the victor's prize. Her son succeeded. Transported with joy at a sight so glorious, the mother overleaped the fence which enclosed the magistrates, and, in the violence of that exertion, let fall her garment. She was by consequence known to be a woman, but absolved from all criminality. For that mild and equitable sentence she was indebted to the merit of her father, her brothers, and her son, who all obtained the victor's crown. The incident, however, gave birth to a new law, whereby it was enacted that the masters of the gymnastic art should, for the future, come naked to the Olympic games. Ælian, lib. x. 1; and see Pausanias, lib. v. 6.

[3] Nicostratus is praised by Pausanias (lib. v. 20) as a great master of the athletic arts. Quintilian has also recorded his prowess: "Nicostratus, whom in our youth we saw advanced in years, would instruct his pupil in every branch of his art, and make him, what he was himself, an invincible champion. Invincible he was, since, on one and

that amazing vigour waste itself away in nothing better than the frivolous art of darting the javelin, or throwing the quoit? With the same feeling I summon you now from the theatre and public recitals to the business of the forum, to the tribunals of justice, to scenes of real contention, to a conflict worthy of your abilities; especially since you cannot fall back upon the excuse alleged by many, that poetry is safer than oratory, less liable to give offence; for the ardour of your fine genius has already blazed forth, and you have given offence, not for sake of a friend—that would be far less dangerous—but on behalf of Cato! Nor can you offer in excuse, either the duty of your profession, justice to your client, or the unguarded heat of debate. It is manifest that you fixed upon a great historical personage with deliberate design, and as a character that would give weight and authority to your sentiments. You will reply, I am aware, it was that very circumstance which gained you such universal applause, and rendered you the general topic of discourse. Talk no more then, I beseech you, of security and repose, whilst you thus industriously raise up to yourself so potent an adversary. For my own part, at least, I am contented with engaging in questions of a more modern and private nature; wherein, if in defence of a friend I am under a necessity of taking liberties, unacceptable, perhaps, to my superiors, the honest freedom of my zeal will, I trust, not only be excused, but applauded.

11. Aper having delivered this with his usual warmth and earnestness, Maternus replied in a milder tone, and with an air of pleasantry: Prepared as I was to prefer against the orators an indictment no less copious than my friend's panegyric in their behalf, (for I expected that he would proceed to decry the poets, and confound their art,) he has somewhat ingeniously softened my asperity by certain concessions he is pleased to make in their favour. He is willing to allow those whose genius does not point to oratory, to apply themselves to poetry; but I, who might do something, and attain some distinction as a pleader, have chosen, nevertheless, to build my reputation on dramatic poetry. [The first attempt I made for this purpose, was by exposing the

the same day, he entered the lists as a wrestler and a boxer, and was proclaimed conqueror in both."—Quint. lib. ii. 8.

dangerous power of Vatinius:[1] a power which even Nero himself disapproved, and which that infamous favourite abused to the profanation of the sacred Muses.][2] And I am persuaded, if I enjoy any share of fame, it is to poetry rather than to oratory that I am indebted for the acquisition. It is my fixed purpose, therefore, entirely to withdraw myself from the fatigue of the bar. The homage of visitors, the train of attendants, and the multitude of clients, which Aper has represented in such pompous colours, have no charms for me; no more have those sculptured honours which he mentioned; though they too have made their way into my house, notwithstanding my inclinations to the contrary. Hitherto I find my condition and my peace of mind better secured by innocence than by eloquence; and I am under no apprehension I shall ever have occasion to open my lips in the senate, unless, perhaps, in defence of a friend.

12. But woods, and groves, and solitude itself, the objects of Aper's invective, to me afford such delight, that I reckon it among the chief blessings of poetry that it is cultivated far from the noise and bustle of the world, without a client to besiege my doors, or a criminal to distress me with his tears and squalor. Free from those distractions, the poet retires to scenes of solitude, where peace and innocence reside, and there he treads on consecrated ground. It was there that Eloquence first grew up, and there she reared her temple. In such retreats she first adorned herself with those graces which have made mankind enamoured of her charms; and there she inspired the hearts of the blameless and the good.

[1] Vatinius was a favourite at the court of Nero. Tacitus calls him the spawn of a cook's-shop and a tippling-house: "sutrinæ et tabernæ alumnus." He recommended himself to the favour of the prince by his scurrility and vulgar humour. Being, by those arts, raised above himself, he became the declared enemy of all good men, and acted a distinguished part among the vilest instruments of that pernicious court. See his character, Annals, xv. 34. When an illiberal and low buffoon basks in the sunshine of a court, and enjoys exorbitant power, the cause of literature can have nothing to expect. The liberal arts must, by consequence, be degraded by a corrupt taste, and learning will be left to run wild and grow to seed.

[2] This whole passage is hopelessly unintelligible in the original: such is the sentence upon it with which Orelli (ed. 1846) sums up an elaborate excursus, in which the most notable suggestions of preceding commentators are severally discussed.

Oracles first spoke in woods and sacred groves. As to the species of oratory which practises for lucre, or with views of ambition; that sanguinary eloquence[1] now so much in vogue; t is of modern growth, the offspring of corrupt manners, and legenerate times; and as you, Aper, expressed it, it is adopted as a deadly weapon.

The early and more happy period of the world, or, as we oets call it, the golden age, free alike from orators and from rimes, abounded with inspired poets, who exerted their noble alents, not in defending the guilty, but in celebrating the ood. Accordingly, no character was ever more eminently istinguished, or more augustly honoured: first by the gods hemselves, by whom the poets were supposed to be admitted o their feasts, and employed as messengers of their high ehests; and afterwards by that sacred offspring of the gods, he first venerable race of legislators. In that glorious list 're read the names, not of orators indeed, but of Orpheus,[2] nd Linus, or, if we are inclined to trace the illustrious roll ;ill higher, even of Apollo himself.

[1] The phrase in the original is full and expressive, "lucrosæ hu- et sanguinantis eloquentiæ,"—that gainful and blood-thirsty elo- uence. The immoderate wealth acquired by Eprius Marcellus has een mentioned in this Dialogue, c. 8. Pliny gives us an idea of the ast acquisitions gained by Regulus, the notorious informer. From a ate of indigence, he rose, by a train of villanous actions, to such mense riches, that he once consulted the omens, to know how soon should be worth sixty millions of sesterces, and found them so vourable, that he had no doubt of being worth double that sum. ib. ii. epist. 20.) In another epistle, the same author relates that egulus, having lost his son, was visited upon that occasion by multi- des of people, who all in secret detested him, yet paid their court th as much assiduity as if they esteemed and loved him. They taliated upon this man his own insidious arts: to gain the friendship Regulus, they played the game of Regulus himself. He in the antime dwells in his villa on the other side of the Tiber, where he s covered a large tract of ground with magnificent porticos, and ed the banks of the river with elegant statues; profuse, with all his arice, and, in the depth of infamy, proud and vainglorious. (Lib. iv. . 2.) All this splendour in which Regulus lived was the fruit of a inful and blood-thirsty eloquence; if that may be called eloquence, ich, Pliny says, was nothing more than a crazed imagination: "nihil ter ingenium insanum." (Lib. iv. ep. 7.)

[2] Orpheus, in poetic story, was the son of Calliope; and Linus boasted Apollo for his father. Orpheus embarked in the Argonautic expe- ion. His history of it, together with his hymns, is still extant; but ether genuine, is much doubted.

But these things, perhaps, will be treated by Aper as fables, and inventions of fancy. He cannot, however, deny that Homer has received as signal honours from posterity as Demosthenes; or that the fame of Sophocles or Euripides is as extensive as that of Lysias[1] or Hyperides; that Cicero's merit is less universally confessed than Virgil's; or that not one of the orations of Asinius or Messala[2] is in so much request as the Medea of Ovid, or the Thyestes of Varius.

[1] Lysias, the celebrated orator, was a native of Syracuse, the chief town in Sicily. He lived about four hundred years before the Christian era. Cicero says, that he did not addict himself to the practice of the bar; but his compositions were so judicious, so pure and elegant, that you might venture to pronounce him a perfect orator. (Cicero, De Claris Orat. s. 35.) Quintilian gives the same opinion. "Lysias," he says, "preceded Demosthenes: he is acute and elegant, and if to teach the art of speaking were the only business of an orator, nothing more perfect can be found. He has no redundancy, nothing superfluous, nothing too refined or foreign to his purpose: his style is flowing, but more like a pure fountain than a noble river." (Quint. lib. x. 1.) A considerable number of his orations is still extant, all written with exquisite taste and inexpressible sweetness. (See a very pleasing translation by Dr. Gillies.) Hyperides flourished at Athens in the time of Demosthenes, Æschines, Lycurgus, and other famous orators. "That age," says Cicero, "poured forth a torrent of eloquence of the best and purest kind, without the false glitter of affected ornament, in a style of noble simplicity, which lasted to the end of that period." (De Claris Orat. s. 36.) Quintilian allows to Hyperides a keen discernment, and great sweetness of style; but he pronounces him an orator designed by nature to shine in causes of no great moment. (Lib. x. 1.) Whatever might be the case when this dialogue happened, it is certain at present that the fame of Sophocles and Euripides has eclipsed the two Greek orators.

[2] For an account of Asinius Pollio and Corvinus Messala, see Annals, xi. 6. The two great poets of the Augustan age have transmitted the name of Asinius Pollio to the latest posterity. Virgil has celebrated him as a poet, and a commander of armies, in the Illyrican and Dalmatic wars: and Horace, as an orator and statesman. But after all, the question put by Maternus is, Can any of their orations be compared to the Medea of Ovid, or the Thyestes of Varius? Those two tragedies are so often praised by the critics of antiquity, that the republic of letters has reason to lament the loss. Quintilian says that the Medea of Ovid was a specimen of genius that showed to what heights the poet could have risen, had he thought fit rather to curb than give the rein to his imagination. (Lib. x. 1.) The works of Varius, if we except a few fragments, are wholly lost. Horace, in his journey to Brundusium, met him and Virgil, and he mentions the incident with the rapture of a friend that loved them both. Horace also celebrates Varius as a poet of sublime genius. (Lib. i. ode 6.) A few fragments only of

13. By no means do I shrink from comparing the fortune and the happy communion of poets, with the restless and anxious life of the orator; even though the hazardous contentions of the latter may possibly raise him to the consular dignity. Far more desirable, in my estimation, was the calm retreat of Virgil:[1] where yet he lived not unhonoured by his prince, nor unregarded by the Roman people: witness the letters of Augustus; witness the conduct of the people itself, who, when some of Virgil's verses were repeated in the theatre, where he happened to be present, rose up to a man, and saluted him with the same respect that they would have paid to Augustus.[2]

his works have reached posterity. His tragedy of Thyestes is highly praised by Quintilian. That judicious critic does not hesitate to say that it may be opposed to the best productions of the Greek stage. Varius lived in high favour at the court of Augustus. After the death of Virgil, he was joined with Plotius and Tucca to revise the works of that admirable poet. The Varius of Virgil, so often celebrated in the Pastorals, was, notwithstanding what some of the commentators have said, a different person from Varius, the author of Thyestes.

[1] The rural delight of Virgil is described by himself:—

Rura mihi et rigui placeant in vallibus amnes;
Flumina amem, sylvasque inglorius. O ubi campi,
Sperchiusque, et virginibus bacchata Lacænis
Taygeta! O quis me gelidis sub montibus Hæmi
Sistat, et ingenti ramorum protegat umbra?
Georg. ii. 485.

"Me may the lowly vales and woodland please
And winding rivers and inglorious ease;
O that I wander'd by Sperchius' flood,
Or on Taygetus' sacred top I stood!
Who in cool Hæmus' vales my limbs will lay,
And in the darkest thicket hide from day?"
Wharton's Virgil.

Besides this poetical retreat, which his imagination could command at any time, Virgil had a real and delightful villa near Naples, where he composed his Georgics, and wrote great part of the Æneid.

[2] When Augustus, or any eminent citizen distinguished by his public merit, appeared in the theatre, the people testified their joy by acclamations and unbounded applause. It is recorded by Horace, that Mæcenas received that public honour:—

——— Datus in theatro
Cum tibi plausus,
Care Mæcenas eques, ut paterni
Fluminis ripæ, simul et jocosa
Redderet laudes tibi Vaticani
Montis imago.—Lib. i. ode 20.

[When

Even in our own times, will any man say that Secundus Pomponius,[1] in point of dignity or extent of fame, is inferior to Domitius Afer?[2] As for Crispus and Marcellus, who have been cited as bright examples, what is there in their elevation to be coveted? Is it that they are feared by numbers, and live in fear themselves? That they are daily courted for their favours, and the men who obtain their suit hate them? That they are bound to such a degree of adulation, as never to be thought by their masters sufficiently servile, nor by the people sufficiently free? And after all, what is the amount of this boasted power of theirs? The emperor's freedmen commonly enjoy as much. But as Virgil sings, "Me let the sweet Muses lead to their soft retreats, their living fountains, and melodious groves, where I may dwell remote from care, master of myself, and under no necessity of doing every day what my heart condemns. Let me no more be seen in the wrangling forum, a pale and anxious candidate for precarious fame; and let neither the tumult of visitors crowding to my levee, nor the eager haste of officious freedmen, disturb my morning rest. Let me live free from solicitude, a stranger to the art of promising legacies,[3] in order to buy the friend-

When Virgil appeared, the audience paid the same compliment to a man whose poetry adorned the Roman story. The letters from Augustus, which are mentioned in this passage, have perished in the ruins of ancient literature.

[1] Pomponius Secundus was of consular rank, and an eminent writer of tragedy. See Annals, ii. 13.

[2] Quintilian makes honourable mention of Domitius Afer. He says, when he was a boy, the speeches of that orator for Volusenus Catulus were held in high estimation. (Lib. x. 1.) He adds, in another part of the same chapter, that Domitius Afer and Julius Africanus were, of all the orators who flourished in his time, without comparison the best. But Afer stands distinguished by the splendour of his diction, and the rhetorical art which he has displayed in all his compositions. You would not scruple to rank him among the ancient orators. Afer died in the reign of Nero, A. U. C. 812, A. D. 59. In relating his death, Tacitus observes, that he raised himself by his eloquence to the first civil honours; but he does not dismiss him without condemning his morals. (Annals, xiv. 19.)

[3] We find in the Annals and the History of Tacitus a number of instances to justify the sentiments of Maternus. The rich found it necessary to bequeath part of their substance to the prince, in order to secure the remainder for their families. For the same reason, Agricola made Domitian joint-heir with his wife and daughter. (Life of Agricola, c. 43.)

ship of the great; and when nature shall give the signal to retire, may I possess no more than I may bequeath to whom I will. At my funeral let no token of sorrow be seen, no pompous mockery of woe. Crown me with chaplets; strew flowers on my grave, and let my friends erect no vain memorial, to tell where my remains are lodged."

14. Maternus finished with an air of enthusiasm, that seemed to lift him above himself. In that moment, Vipstanus Messala[1] entered the room. From the attention that appeared in every countenance, he concluded that some important business was the subject of debate. I am afraid, said he, that I break in upon you at an unseasonable time. You have some secret to discuss, or, perhaps, a consultation upon your hands.—Far from it, replied Secundus; I wish you had come sooner. You would have had the pleasure of hearing an eloquent discourse from our friend Aper, who has been endeavouring to persuade Maternus to dedicate the whole strength of his genius and his studies to the business of the forum; and an animated reply from Maternus, wherein, as became one who was defending his favourite art, he delivered himself with a boldness and elevation of style more akin to the poetical than the oratorical character.

It would have afforded me infinite pleasure, replied Messala, to have been present at a debate of this kind. And I cannot but express my satisfaction, in finding the most eminent orators of our times, not confining their genius to points relating to their profession, but canvassing in their conversation such other questions of taste and literature as give a very advantageous exercise to their faculties, at the same time that they furnish an entertainment of the most agreeable kind, not only to themselves, but to those who hear them.

[1] Vipstanus Messala commanded a legion, and at the head of it went over to Vespasian's party, in the contention with Vitellius. He was a man of illustrious birth, and equal merit; the only one, says Tacitus, who entered into that war from motives of virtue. (Hist. iii. 9.) He was brother to Regulus, the vile informer. Messala, we are told by Tacitus, before he had attained the senatorian age, acquired great fame by pleading the cause of his profligate brother with extraordinary eloquence and family affection. (Hist. iv. 42.) Since Messala has now joined the company, the Dialogue takes a new turn, and, by an easy and natural transition, slides into the question concerning the causes of the decline of eloquence.

And believe me, Secundus, the world received with mu approbation your history of J. Asiaticus,[1] as an earnest th you intend to publish more pieces of the same nature. (the other side, it is observed with equal satisfaction, that Ap has not yet bid adieu to the questions of the schools,[2] b employs his leisure rather after the example of the mode rhetoricians, than of the ancient orators.[3]

15. I perceive, returned Aper, that you continue to tre the moderns with your usual derision and contempt; wh the ancients alone are in full possession of your esteem. is a maxim, indeed, I have frequently heard you advan (and, allow me to say, with much injustice to yourself a to your brother,) that there is no such thing in the prese age as an orator. This you are the less scrupulous to mai tain, as you imagine it cannot be imputed to a spirit of env since you deny yourself a distinction which everybody co cedes to you.

I have hitherto, replied Messala, found no reason to chan my opinion: and I am persuaded, that neither Secundus, n Maternus, nor yourself, Aper, (whatever you may sometim affect to the contrary,) think differently from me. I shoul indeed, be glad, if I could prevail on any of you to investiga and expound the causes of so remarkable a disparity, which often seek to explore in my own thoughts. What to son appears a satisfactory solution of this phenomenon, to me, confess, heightens the difficulty: for I find the very san difference prevails among the Grecian orators; and that t

[1] This is probably the same Asiaticus, who, in the revolt of the pr vinces of Gaul, fought on the side of Vindex. (See Hist. ii. 94.) Bi graphy was, in that evil period, a tribute paid by the friends departed merit, and the only kind of writing in which men could da faintly to utter a sentiment in favour of virtue and public liberty.

[2] In the declamations of Seneca and Quintilian we have abunda examples of these scholastic exercises, which Juvenal has placed in ridiculous light:—

> Et nos ergo manum ferulæ subduximus, et nos
> Consilium dedimus Syllæ, privatus ut altum
> Dormiret.—Sat. i. 15.
>
> "Provoked by these incorrigible fools,
> I left declaiming in pedantic schools;
> Where, with men-boys, I strove to get renown,
> Advising Sylla to a private gown."—Dryden's Juvenal.

[3] This is said ironically.

priest Nicetes,[1] together with others of the Ephesian and Mitylenean[2] schools, who content themselves with raising the acclamations of their tasteless auditors, deviate much further from Æschines or Demosthenes, than Afer and Africanus,[3] or you, my friends, from Tully or Asinius.

16. The question you have started, said Secundus, is a very important one, and well worthy of consideration. But who so capable of doing justice to it as yourself? who, besides the advantages of a fine genius and great literature, have given, it seems, particular attention to this inquiry.—I am very willing, answered Messala, to lay before you my thoughts upon the subject, provided you will assist me with yours as I go along.—I will engage for two of us, replied Maternus: Secundus and myself will speak to such points as you shall, I do not say omit, but think proper to leave to us. As for Aper, you just now informed us that it is usual with him to dissent from you in this matter: and, indeed, I see he is already preparing to oppose us, and will not tamely bear to see us thus leagued in support of the ancients.

Undoubtedly, returned Aper, I shall not suffer the moderns to be condemned, unheard and undefended, by this conspiracy of yours. But first let me ask, who it is you call ancients? What age of orators do you distinguish by that designation?[4] The word always suggests to me a Nestor, or a Ulysses, men who lived about twelve hundred years since; whereas you seem to apply it to Demosthenes and Hyperides, who, it is

[1] Nicetes was a native of Smyrna, and a rhetorician in great celebrity. Seneca says (Controversiarum, lib. iv. 25), that his scholars, content with hearing their master, had no ambition to be heard themselves. Pliny the younger, among the commendations which he bestows on a friend, mentions, as a praiseworthy part of his character, that he attended the lectures of Quintilian and Nicetes Sacerdos, of whom Pliny himself was at that time a constant follower. (Lib. vi. ep. 6.)

[2] Mitylene was the chief city of the isle of Lesbos, in the Ægean Sea, near the coast of Asia. The place at this day is called Metelin, subject to the Turkish dominion. Ephesus was a city of Ionia, in the Lesser Asia, now called Ajaloue by the Turks, who are masters of the place.

[3] Domitius Afer and Julius Africanus have been already mentioned, c. 13, note. Both are highly praised by Quintilian. For Asinius Pollio, see c. 12, note.

[4] Quintilian puts the same question; and, according to him, Demosthenes is the last of the ancients among the Greeks, as Cicero is among the Romans. See Quintilian, lib. viii. 5.

agreed, flourished so late as the times of Philip and Alexander, and, indeed, survived them. It appears from hence, that there is not much above four hundred years' distance between our age and that of Demosthenes: an interval which, considered with respect to human duration, appears, I acknowledge, extremely long; but if compared with that immense space of time which includes the several ages of the world, is exceedingly contracted, and seems almost but of yesterday. For if it be true, what Cicero observes in his treatise inscribed to Hortensius, that the great and genuine year is that period in which the heavenly bodies return to the same position wherein they were placed when they first began their respective orbits; and this revolution contains 12,954 of our solar years; then Demosthenes, this ancient Demosthenes of yours, lived in the same year, or rather I might say, in the same month,[1] with ourselves.

17. But to mention the Roman orators: I presume, it is not Menenius Agrippa[2] (who may with some propriety, indeed be called an ancient,) you prefer to the men of eloquence among the moderns; but Cicero, Cæsar,[3] Cælius,[4] Calvus

[1] The argument is this: If the great year is the measure of time then, as it consists, according to Cicero, of 12,954 solar years, the whole being divided by twelve, every month of the great year would be clearly 1080 years. According to that calculation, Demosthenes not only lived in the same year with the persons engaged in the Dialogue but within a month of them. These are the months to which Virgil alludes in the fourth Eclogue:—

Incipient magni procedere menses.

[2] Menenius Agrippa was consul A. U. C. 251.

[3] Cæsar the dictator was, as the poet expresses it, graced with both Minervas. Quintilian is of opinion, that if he had devoted his whole time to the profession of eloquence, he would have been the great rival of Cicero. The energy of his language, his strength of conception and his power over the passions, were so striking, that he may be said to have harangued with the same spirit that he fought. (Lib. x. 1.)

[4] Marcus Cælius Rufus, in the judgment of Quintilian, was an orator of considerable genius. In the conduct of a prosecution he was remarkable for a certain urbanity, that gave a secret charm to his whole speech. It is to be regretted that he was not a man of better conduct and longer life. (Quint. lib. x. 1.) His letters to Cicero make the eighth book of the "Epistolæ ad Familiares." Velleius Paterculus says of him, that his style of eloquence and his cast of mind bore a resemblance to Curio, but raised him above that factious orator. His genius for mischief and evil deeds was not inferior to Curio's, and his motives

Brutus,[1] Asinius, and Messala, to whom you give this honourable precedency: though why these should be deemed ancients rather than moderns, I am at a loss to know. To instance in Cicero: he was killed, as his freedman Tiro informs us, on the 26th of December, in the consulship of Hirtius and Pansa,[2] in which year Augustus and Pedius succeeded them in that dignity. Now, if we take fifty-six years for the reign of Augustus, and add twenty-three for that of Tiberius, about four for that of Caius, fourteen a-piece for Claudius and Nero,

were strong and urgent, since his fortune was worse than even his frame of mind. (Vell. Paterc. lib. ii. 68.) Licinius Macer Calvus, we are told by Seneca, maintained a long but unjust contention with Cicero himself for the palm of eloquence. He was a warm and vehement accuser, insomuch that Vatinius, though defended by Cicero, interrupted Calvus in the middle of his speech, and said to the judges, "Though this man is eloquent, does it follow that I must be condemned?" (Sen. Controv. iii. 19.)

[1] This was the famous Marcus Junius Brutus, who stood forth in the cause of liberty, and delivered his country from the usurpation of Julius Cæsar. Cicero describes him in that great tragic scene, brandishing his bloody dagger, and calling on Cicero by name, to tell him that his country was free. (Philipp. ii. 28.) Akenside has retouched this passage with all the colours of a sublime imagination:—

> "Look then abroad through nature, through the range
> Of planets, suns, and adamantine spheres,
> Wheeling unshaken through the void immense,
> And speak, O man! does this capacious scene
> With half that kindling majesty dilate
> Thy strong conception, as when Brutus rose
> Refulgent from the stroke of Cæsar's fate,
> Amid the crowd of patriots, and his arm
> Aloft extending, like eternal Jove
> When guilt brings down the thunder, call'd aloud
> On Tully's name, and shook his crimson steel,
> And bade the Father of his Country hail!
> For, lo! the tyrant prostrate in the dust,
> And Rome again is free."—Pleasures of Imag. b. i. 487.

According to Quintilian, Brutus was fitter for philosophical speculations, and books of moral theory, than for the career of public oratory. In the former he was equal to the weight and dignity of his subject: you clearly saw that he believed what he said. (Quintil. lib. x. 1.)

[2] Hirtius and Pansa were consuls A. U. C. 711; before the Christian era, 43. In this year, the famous triple league, called the Triumvirate, was formed between Augustus, Lepidus, and Antony. The proscription, or the list of those who were doomed to die for the crime of adhering to the cause of liberty, was also settled, and Cicero was one of the number.

one for Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, together with the six that our present excellent prince has enjoyed the empire, we shall have about one hundred and twenty years[1] from the death of Cicero to these times: a period to which it is not impossible that a man's life may extend. I remember, when I was in Britain, to have met with an old soldier, who assured me, he had taken part in the battle in which his countrymen opposed Cæsar's descent upon that island.[2] If we suppose this person, by being taken prisoner, or by any other means, to have been brought to Rome, he might have heard Cæsar and Cicero, and likewise any of our contemporaries. At the last public donative,[3] you yourselves saw several of the popu-

[1] Between the consulship of Augustus, which began immediately after the destruction of Hirtius and Pansa, A. U. C. 711, and the death of that emperor, which was A. U. C. 767, fifty-six years intervened, and to the sixth of Vespasian (A. U. C. 828), about 118 years. For the sake of a round number, it is called in the Dialogue a space of 120 years.

[2] Julius Cæsar landed in Britain in the years of Rome 699 and 700. It does not appear when Aper was in Britain; it could not be till the year of Rome 796, when Aulus Plautius, by order of the emperor Claudius, undertook the conquest of the island. At that time, the Briton who fought against Cæsar must have been far advanced in years.

[3] A largess was given to the people in the fourth year of Vespasian, when Domitian entered on his second consulship. This, Brotier says, appears on a medal, with this inscription: CONG. II. COS. II. "Congiarium alterum, Domitiano consule secundum." The custom of giving large distributions to the people was for many ages established at Rome. Brotier traces it from Ancus Martius, the fourth king of Rome, when the poverty of the people called for relief. The like bounty was distributed by the generals who returned in triumph. Lucullus and Julius Cæsar displayed on those occasions great pomp and magnificence. Corn, wine, and oil were plentifully distributed, and the popularity acquired by those means was, perhaps, the ruin of the commonwealth. Cæsar lavished money, Augustus followed the example, and Tiberius did the same, but prodigality was not his practice: his politic genius taught him all the arts of governing. The bounties thus distributed were called, when given to the people, *congiaria*, and, to the soldiers, *donativa*. Whoever desires to form an idea of the number of Roman citizens who, at different times, received largesses, and the prodigious expense attending them, may see an account drawn up with diligent attention by Brotier, in an elaborate note on this passage. He begins with Julius Cæsar, and pursues the inquiry through the several successive emperors, fixing the date and expense at every period, as low down as the consulship of Constantius and Galerius Maximianus; when, the empire being divided into the Eastern and Western, its former magnificence was by consequence much diminished.

lace who acknowledged they had received the same bounty more than once from the hands of Augustus. It is evident, therefore, that these people might have been present at the pleadings both of Corvinus[1] and Asinius: for Corvinus lived to the middle of the reign of Augustus, and Asinius nearly to its close. Surely, then, you will not split a century, and call one orator an ancient, and another a modern, when the very same person might be an auditor of both; and thus, as it were, render them contemporaries.

18. I have made these preliminary remarks to show that the glory, whatever it be, that accrued to the age in which those orators lived, is not confined to that particular period, but reaches down to the present time, and may more properly be said to belong to us, than to Servius Galba,[2] or to Carbo,[3] and others whom with good reason we call ancients. Of that whole race of orators I may freely say, that their manner cannot now be relished. The language of these last is coarse, and their composition rough, uncouth, and harsh; and I could wish that your Calvus,[4] your Cælius, and even Cicero himself, had not thought such models worthy of imitation. I mean to speak my mind with freedom; but I must premise that eloquence changes its form and style with the manners and

[1] The person here called Corvinus was Corvinus Messala, who flourished in the reign of Augustus, at the same time with Asinius Pollio.

[2] Servius Sulpicius Galba was consul A. U. C. 610, before the Christian era 144. Cicero says of him, that he was, in his day, an orator of eminence. When he spoke in public, the natural energy of his mind supported him, and the warmth of his imagination made him vehement and pathetic: his language was animated, bold, and rapid; but when he afterwards took his pen in hand to correct and polish, the fit of enthusiasm was over; his passions ebbed away, and the composition was cold and languid. (De Claris Orat. s. 93.) Suetonius says, that the person here intended was of consular dignity, and by his eloquence gave weight and lustre to his family. (Life of Galba, s. 3.)

[3] Caius Papirius Carbo was consul A. U. C. 634. Cicero wishes that he had proved himself as good a citizen as he was an orator. Being impeached for his turbulent and seditious conduct, he did not choose to stand the event of a trial, but escaped the judgment of the senate by a voluntary death. His life was spent in forensic causes. Men of sense who heard him have reported that he was a fluent, animated, and harmonious speaker; at times pathetic, always pleasing, and abounding with wit. (De Claris Orat. s. 105.)

[4] Calvus and Cælius have been mentioned already. See c. 17, note.

the taste of the age. Thus we find, that Gracchus,[1] compare with the elder Cato,[2] is full and copious; but, in his turn yields to Crassus,[3] an orator more polished and ornate Cicero rises superior to both; more pointed, more harmonious and sublime. Corvinus[4] is considerably more smooth an harmonious in his periods, as well as more correct in hi language, than Cicero. I am not considering which of ther is most eloquent: all I endeavour to prove at present is, tha oratory does not manifest itself in one uniform figure, bu is exhibited by those whom you call ancients under a variet of aspects. However, it is by no means a just way of rea soning, to infer, that one thing must necessarily be wors than another, merely because it is not the same. Yet such i the unaccountable perversity of human nature, that whateve has antiquity to boast, is sure to be admired, and everythin novel is certainly disapproved.

Can we doubt that there have been critics who were bette pleased with Appius Cæcus[5] than with Cato? Cicero had hi censurers, who objected that his style was redundant, turgi

[1] Caius Gracchus was tribune of the people A.U.C. 633. In tha character he took the popular side against the patricians; and, pu suing the plan of the Agrarian law laid down by his brother, Tiberiu Gracchus, he was able by his eloquence to keep the city of Rome i violent agitation. Amidst the tumult, the senate, by a decree, ordere the consul, Lucius Opimius, "to take care that the commonwealt received no injury;" and, says Cicero, not a single night intervene before that magistrate put Gracchus to death.

[2] This is the celebrated Marcus Portius Cato, commonly known b the name of Cato the Censor.

[3] Lucius Licinius Crassus is often mentioned, and always to hi advantage, by Cicero, De Claris Oratoribus. He was born, as appear in that treatise (s. 161), during the consulship of Lælius and Cæpi A.U.C. 614: he was contemporary with Antonius, the celebrated orato and father of Antony the triumvir. Crassus was about four-and-thirt years older than Cicero. When Philippus the consul showed himsel disposed to encroach on the privileges of the senate, and in the pr sence of that body offered indignities to Licinius Crassus, the orator, a Cicero informs us, broke out in a blaze of eloquence against that violen outrage, concluding with that remarkable sentence—"He shall not b a *consul* to me, to whom I am not a *senator*."

[4] Messala Corvinus is often in this Dialogue called Corvinus only

[5] Appius Claudius was censor in the year of Rome 442; dictato 465; and having at a very advanced age lost his sight, he becam better known by the name of Appius Cæcus.

never compressed, immoderately self-complacent, and destitute of Attic elegance. We all have read the letters of Calvus and Brutus to your famous orator. In the course of that correspondence, we plainly see what was Cicero's opinion of those eminent men. The former appeared to him cold and languid; the latter, disjointed, loose, and negligent. On the other hand, we know what they thought in return: Calvus did not hesitate to say, that Cicero was diffuse, luxuriant to a fault, and florid without vigour. Brutus, in express terms, says, he was lengthened out into weakness, and wanted sinew. If you ask my opinion, each of them had reason on his side. But I shall hereafter examine them separately. At present, I speak of them in general terms.

19. The admirers of antiquity are agreed, I think, in extending the area of the ancients as far as Cassius Severus,[1] whom they assert to have been the first that struck out from the plain and simple manner, which till then prevailed. Now I affirm that he did so, not from any deficiency in point of genius or learning, but from his superior judgment and good sense. He saw it was necessary to accommodate oratory, as I observed before, to the different times and tastes of the audience. In early times, the people, rude and unpolished, might well be contented with the tedious length of unskilful speeches; and, indeed, to be able to harangue for a whole day together, was itself looked upon, at that illiterate period, as a

[1] Cassius Severus lived in the latter end of the reign of Augustus, and through a considerable part of that of Tiberius. We read in Suetonius (Life of Octavius, s. 56), that Cassius had the hardiness to institute a prosecution for the crime of poisoning against Asprenas Nonius, who was, at the time, linked in the closest friendship with Augustus. Not content with accusations against the first men in Rome, he chose to vent his malevolence in lampoons and defamatory libels, against the most distinguished of both sexes. It was this that provoked Horace to declare war against Cassius, in an ode (lib. v. ode 6), which begins, "Quid immerentes hospites vexas, canis." See an account of his malevolent spirit, Annals, i. 72. He was at length condemned for his indiscriminate abuse, and banished by Augustus to the Isle of Crete. But his satirical rage was not to be controlled. He continued in exile to discharge his malignity, till at last, at the end of ten years, the senate took cognisance of his guilt, and Tiberius ordered him to be removed from Crete to the Rock of Seriphos, where he languished in old age and misery. (See Annals, iii. 21. The period of ancient oratory ended about the time when Cassius began his career. He was the first of the new school.

talent worthy of admiration. The prolix exordium, the c
cumstantial detail, the ostentatious division of the argume
under different heads, the endless degrees of logical deductic
with whatever else you may find laid down among the pr
cepts of those driest of all writers, Hermagoras and Apoll
dorus,[1] were then held in supreme honour. And, to comple
all, if the orator had just dipped into philosophy, and cou
sprinkle his harangue with some of the trite maxims of th
science, he was extolled to the skies. And no wonder; f
these were new and uncommon topics to them; indeed ve
few of the orators themselves had any acquaintance with t
writings either of the philosophers or the rhetoricians.

In the present age, the tenets of philosophy and the pr
cepts of rhetoric are no longer a secret. The lowest of o
popular assemblies are now, I will not say fully instructe
but certainly acquainte with the elements of literature. T
orator, by consequence, finds himself obliged to seek new a
more subtle avenues to the heart, that he may not offe
fastidious ears, especially before a tribunal where the judge
no longer bound by precedent, but determines according
his will and pleasure; not, as formerly, observing the me
sure of time allowed to the advocate, but taking upon hi
self to prescribe the limits. Nor is this all: the judge,
present, will not condescend to wait till the orator, in h
own way, opens his case; but, of his own authority, remin
him of the point in question, and, if he wanders, calls hi
back from his digression, not without a hint that the cou
wishes to despatch.

20. Who at this time would bear to hear an advocate i
troducing himself with a tedious preface about the infirmiti
of his constitution? Yet that is the usual exordium of Cor
nus. We have five books against Verres.[2] Who now cou

[1] These two rhetoricians flourished in the time of Augustus. Ap
lodorus, we are told by Quintilian (iii. 1), was the preceptor of Aug
tus. He taught in opposition to Theodorus Gadareus, who read lectu
at Rhodes, and was attended by Tiberius during his retreat in th
island. The two contending masters were the founders of oppos
sects, called the Apollodorean and Theodorian.

[2] Doctor Middleton says, "Of the seven excellent orations whi
now remain on the subject of Verres, the first two only were spoke
the one called, 'The Divination;' the other, 'The first Action,' whi
is nothing more than a general preface to the whole cause. The oth
five were published afterwards, as they were prepared and intended

endure that vast redundance? Who could listen to those endless arguments upon points of form, and cavilling exceptions,[1] which we find in the orations of the same celebrated advocate for Marcus Tullius[2] and Aulus Cæcina? Our modern judges are able to anticipate the argument. Their quickness goes before the speaker. If not allured and biassed by the vivacity of his manner, the elegance of his sentiments, and the glowing colours of his descriptions, they soon grow weary of the flat insipid discourse. Even the populace that come to hear have now a taste that requires the gay, the florid, and the brilliant. The dull uncouth style of antiquity would now succeed as ill at the bar, as the modern actor who should attempt to copy the deportment of Roscius,[3] or Ambivius Turpio. Even the young men who are preparing for the career of eloquence, and for that purpose attend the forum and the tribunals of justice, expect not merely to hear, but to carry home some bright illustration, some splendid passage, that deserves to be remembered. What has struck their fancy, they communi-

be spoken, if Verres had made a regular defence: for as this was the only cause in which Cicero had yet been engaged, or ever designed to be engaged, as an accuser, so he was willing to leave those orations as a specimen of his abilities in that way, and the pattern of a just and diligent impeachment of a great and corrupt magistrate."—Life of Cicero, vol. i. p. 86. 4to edit.

[1] The Digest enumerates a multitude of rules concerning "exceptions," to persons, things, the form of the action, the niceties of pleading, and, as the phrase is, motions in arrest of judgment. "Formula" was the set of words necessary to be used in the pleadings. See the Digest, lib. xliv. tit. 1, "De Exceptionibus, Præscriptionibus, et Prædiciis." See also Cujacius, Observat. xxiii.

[2] The oration for Marcus Tullius is highly praised by Macrobius, but is not to be found in Cicero's works. The oration for Aulus Cæcina is still extant. The cause was about the right of succession to a private estate, which depended on a subtle point of law, arising from the interpretation of the prætor's interdict. It shows Cicero's exact knowledge and skill in the civil law, and that his public character and employment gave no interruption to his usual diligence in pleading causes. (Middleton's Life of Cicero, vol. i. p. 116. 4to edit.)

[3] Roscius, in the last period of the republic, was the comedian, whom all Rome admired for his talents. The great esteemed and loved him for his morals. Æsop the tragedian was his contemporary. Ambivius Turpio acted in most of Terence's plays, and seems to have been a manager of the theatre. Cicero, in the treatise "De Senectute," says: "He, who sat near him in the first rows, received the greatest pleasure; but still, those who were at the further end of the theatre, were delighted with him."

cate to each other: and in their letters, the glittering thoug given with sententious brevity, the poetical allusion that e livened the discourse, and the dazzling imagery, are sure to transmitted to their respective colonies and provinces. T ornaments of poetic diction are now required, not inde copied from the rude obsolete style of Accius and Pacuviu but embellished with the graces of Horace, Virgil, and Luc In compliance with the taste of the age, our orators gr every day more polished and adorned. Let it not be said th their speeches are less effective, because they fall pleasing on the ears of the judges. Are the temples, raised by o modern architects, of a weaker structure, because they a not formed with shapeless stones, but with polished marb and lustrous gilding?

21. Shall I fairly own to you the impression which I ge rally receive from the ancient orators? They make me lau or lull me to sleep. Nor is this the case only when I read t orations of Canutius,[2] Arrius, Furnius, Torianus, and others the same school, or rather, the same infirmary;[3] a lean a bloodless sickly race of orators, without sinew, colour, or p portion. But what shall be said of your admired Calvus

[1] Accius and Pacuvius flourished at Rome about the middle of t sixth century from the foundation of the city.

[2] There is in this place a blunder of the copyists, which alm makes the sentence unintelligible. Canutius may be the person m tioned by Suetonius, De Claris Rhetoribus. Cicero says of Arri that he was a striking proof of what consequence it was at Rome be useful to others, and always ready to be subservient to their hono or to ward off danger. For, by that assiduity, Arrius raised hims from a low beginning to wealth and honours, and was even ranked the number of orators, though void of learning, and without geni or abilities. (De Claris Orat. s. 243.) Furnius may be supposed, r without probability, to be the person with whom Cicero correspond (Epist. ad Familiares, lib. x. ep. 25, 26.) With regard to Torianus are left in the dark. The commentators offer various conjectures; b conjecture is often a specious amusement; the ingenious folly of m who take pains to bewilder themselves, and reason only to show th useless learning.

[3] The puny orators are said to be in an infirmary, like sickly m who were nothing but skin and bone. These, says Cicero, were admir of the Attic manner; but it were to be wished that they had t wholesome blood, not merely the bones, of their favourite declaime (Cicero, De Claris Oratoribus.)

[4] What is here said of Calvus is not confirmed by the judgment Quintilian. His orations, which were extant at the time of th Dialogue, are now totally lost.

Ie, I think, has left no less than one-and-twenty volumes: in he whole collection, there is not more than one or two short rations with which I am satisfied. Upon this point there is o difference of opinion. Who now reads his declamations gainst Asitius or Drusus? His speeches against Vatinius are ı the hands of the curious, particularly the second: for the ınguage is elegant; the sentiments are striking, and the ear ı satisfied with the roundness of the periods. In this speci- ıen we see that he had an idea of just composition, but his ənius was not equal to his judgment. What of the orations ? Cælius? Though upon the whole defective, they are not ithout their beauties. Some passages are highly finished. ı those we acknowledge the nice touches of modern ele- ınce. In general, however, the coarse expression, the halting ɛriod, and the vulgarity of the sentiments, have too much of ıe leaven of antiquity; nor do I think there is any one so ıamoured of the ancients as to admire him in that part of s character.

With regard to Julius Cæsar,[1] engaged as he was in vast ısigns and enterprises, we may forgive him the want of at perfection which might, otherwise, be expected from so blime a genius. Brutus, in like manner, may be excused : account of his philosophical speculations. Both he and esar, in their oratorical attempts, fell short of themselves. ıeir warmest admirers acknowledge the fact, nor is there an ɜtance to the contrary, unless there be here and there a ıder of Cæsar's speech for Decius the Samnite,[2] and that of utus for king Deiotarus,[3] and others of the same languid and kewarm character; or some one to admire their verses; for rses they both made, and published too, I will not say, with ɔre merit than Cicero, but certainly with better fortune, for ver know of their existence.

Asinius too, though he lived nearer to our own times, gives

Here again Quintilian, that candid and able judge, has given a ferent opinion. Cicero tells us, that of all the eminent orators, sar was the person who spoke the Latin language in the greatest ity, and arrived at that consummate perfection by study, by dili- ıt application, and his thorough knowledge of all polite literature. › Claris Orat. s. 252.)

Cæsar's speech for Decius the Samnite, and all his other produc- ns (except the Commentaries), are totally lost.

This speech of Brutus is also lost with his other works.

me the idea of one who had studied among the Menenii a
Appii; he certainly imitated Pacuvius and Accius, not o
in his tragedies, but also in his orations, so cold and dry he
But the beauty of an oration, like that of the human bo
is then perfect, when the veins do not project, nor can
bones be counted; but a wholesome blood fills the lim
rises up through the flesh, and mantles over the thews a
sinews with the comely hue of health. I am not willing
disturb the memory of Corvinus Messala. If he did
reach the graces of modern composition, the defect does
seem to have sprung from choice. The vigour of his gen
was not equal to his judgment.

22. I now come to Cicero, who had the same contest w
those of his own times, as mine, my friends, with you. Th
it seems, were favourers of the ancients; whilst he prefer
the eloquence of his contemporaries: and, in truth, he exc
the orators of his own age in nothing more remarkably th
in the solidity of his judgment. He was the first who se
polish upon oratory; the first who cultivated delicacy of
pression, and the art of composition. He introduced into
discourses passages of lively colouring, and phrases of pregn
brevity; particularly in his later performances, when mu
practice and experience had taught him a more improv
manner. But his earlier compositions are not without t
blemishes of antiquity. He is tedious in his exordiums, t
circumstantial in his narrations, and careless in retrenchi
luxuriances. He seems not easily affected, and is but rar
fired; his periods[1] are seldom either properly rounded,

[1] The words *sententia* and *sensus* were technical terms with t
critics of antiquity. Quintilian gives the distinct meaning of ea
with his usual precision. According to the established usage, t
word *sensus* signified our ideas or conceptions, as they rise in t
mind: by *sententia* was intended a proposition, in the close of a peri
so expressed, as to dart a sudden brilliancy, for that reason call
lumen orationis. He says, these artificial ornaments, which the ancie
used but sparingly, were the constant practice of the modern orato
"Consuetudo jam tenuit, ut mente concepta, *sensus* vocaremus; lumi
autem, præcipueque in clausulis posita, *sententias*. Quæ minus cre
apud antiquos, nostris temporibus modo carent." (Lib. viii. 5.) Th
luminous sentences, Quintilian says, may be called the eyes of
oration; but eyes are not to be placed in every part, lest the ot
members should lose their function. (Ibid.) As Cowley says,—

"Jewels at nose and lips but ill appear;
Rather than all things wit, let none be there."

happily pointed: he has nothing, in fine, you would wish to make your own. His speeches, like a rude edifice, have strength, indeed, and permanency; but are destitute of that elegance and splendour which are necessary to render them perfectly agreeable.

Now I would have the orator be like the man of wealth and station, for whom it is not enough that his house will keep out the wind and the rain; it must strike the eye, and present a pleasing object. Nor will it suffice that the furniture may answer all domestic purposes; it should have gold and gems so curiously wrought, that they will bear examination, often viewed, and always admired. The common utensils, which are either mean or sordid, should be carefully removed out of sight. In like manner, the true orator should avoid the trite and vulgar. Let him reject the antiquated phrase, and whatever is covered with the rust of time; let his sentiments be expressed with spirit, not in clumsy, ill-constructed periods, like those of a dull writer of annals; let him banish low, insipid raillery, and let him know how to vary the structure of his periods, so as not to end every sentence with the same unvaried cadence.[1]

23. I will not expose the meanness of Cicero's conceits, such as his "wheel of Fortune,"[2] and his punning on the word

[1] In order to form a good style, the sentence should always be closed with variety, strength, and harmony. The ancient rhetoricians held this to be so essentially requisite, that Quintilian has given it a full discussion. That, he says, which offends the ear, will not easily gain admission to the mind. Words should be fitted to their places, so that they may aptly coalesce with one another. In building, the most ill-shapen stones may be conveniently fixed; and in like manner, a good style must have proper words in proper places, all arranged in order, and closing the sentence with grace and harmony. (Quintil. lib. ix. 4.)

[2] The remark in this place alludes to a passage in the oration against Piso, where we find a frivolous stroke of false wit. Cicero reproaches Piso for his dissolute manners, and his scandalous debauchery. "Who," he says, "in all that time, saw you sober? Who beheld you doing any one thing, worthy of a liberal mind? Did you once appear in public? The house of your colleague resounded with songs and minstrels: he himself danced naked in the midst of his wanton company; and while he *wheeled* about with alacrity in the *circular motion* of the dance, he never once thought of *the wheel of fortune*." "Quis te illis diebus sobrium, quis agentem aliquid, quod esset libero dignum? Quis denique in publico vidit? Cum collegæ tui domus cantu et cymbalis personaret: cumque ipse nudus in convivio saltaret, in quo ne tum quidem,

"Verres,"[1] nor his affectation of concluding almost every oth period with, "as it should seem,"[2] instead of pointing the with some luminous and sententious turn. I mention eve these with reluctance, and pass over many others of the sam injudicious cast. It is singly, however, in little affectatio of this kind, that they who are pleased to style themselv ancient orators seem to admire and imitate him. I sha content myself with describing their characters, witho mentioning their names: but you are aware there are ce tain pretenders to taste who prefer Lucilius[3] to Horac

cum illum suum *saltatorium versaret orbem, fortunæ rotam* pertimesc bat."—Oratio in Pisonem, prima pars, s. 22. Delph. edit. vol. iii.

[1] The passage here alluded to, presents us with a double pun. Th word *Verres* is the name of a man, and also signifies a *boar pig*, as w read in Horace, "Verris obliquum meditantis ictum." (Lib. iii. od 22.) The word *jus* is likewise of twofold meaning, importing *law* an *sauce*, or broth; "tepidumque liguerit jus." (Lib. i. sat. 3.) Th objection to Cicero is, that playing on both the words, and takin advantage of their ambiguous meaning, he says it could not be matt of wonder that the *Verrian jus* was such bad *hog-soup*. The wit (if deserves that name) is mean enough; but, in justice to Cicero, should be remembered, that he himself calls it frigid, and says, tha the men who in their anger could be so very facetious as to blam the priest who did not sacrifice such a hog (Verres), were idle an ridiculous. He adds, that he should not descend to repeat such saying (for they were neither witty, nor worthy of notice in such a cause had he not thought it material to show, that the iniquity of Verr was, in the mouth of the vulgar, a subject of ridicule, and a prove bial joke. "Hinc illi homines erant, qui etiam ridiculi inveniebantu ex dolore: quorum alii, ut audistis, negabant mirandum esse, *jus* ta nequam esse *Verrinum:* alii etiam frigidiores erant; sed quia stomach bantur, ridiculi videbantur esse, cum *sacerdotem* execrabantur, qu *Verrem* tam nequam reliquisset. Quæ ego non commemorarem (nequ enim perfacete dicta, neque porro hac severitate digna sunt) nisi vo id vellem recordari, istius nequitiam et iniquitatem tum in ore vulg atque communibus proverbiis esse versatam."—In Verrem, lib. i. pa tertia, s. 121.

[2] Quintilian acknowledges that the words "esse videatur" occu frequently in Cicero's Orations. He adds, that he knew several wh fancied that they had performed wonders when they placed that phras in the close of a sentence. (Quintil. lib. x. 2.)

[3] The species of composition called satire was altogether of Roma growth. Lucilius had the honour of being the inventor; and h succeeded so well, that even in Quintilian's time, his admirers pr ferred him not only to the writers who followed in the same way, bu to all poets of every denomination. (Lib. x. 1.) The great criti however, pronounces judgment in favour of Horace, who, he says, i more terse and pure; a more acute observer of life, and qualified b nature to touch the ridicule of the manners with the nicest hand.

and Lucretius to Virgil; who hold the eloquence of your favourite Bassus or Nonianus[1] in the utmost contempt, when compared with that of Sisenna[2] or Varro;[3] in a word, who despise the productions of our modern rhetoricians, yet are in raptures with those of Calvus. We see these men prosing in the courts of judicature after the manner of the ancients (as they call it), till they are deserted by the whole audience, and are scarce supportable even to their very clients; so dreary and squalid they are; so much is their boasted healthy sobriety an evidence of a sickly habit and valetudinary abstinence. No physician would call that a sound constitution, which requires constant care and anxiety of mind. To be only not indisposed, is but a small acquisition; it is spirits, vivacity, and vigour, that I require: he who can just say that he is well, and no more, is not far from being unwell.

Be it then (as with great ease it may, and in fact is) the

[1] Aufidius Bassus and Servilius Nonianus were writers of history.

[2] Sisenna, we are told by Cicero, was a man of learning, well skilled in the Roman language, acquainted with the laws and constitution of his country, and possessed of no small share of wit; but eloquence was not his element, and his practice in the forum was inconsiderable. (See De Claris Oratoribus, s. 228.) In a subsequent part of the same work, Cicero says, that Sisenna was of opinion, that to use uncommon words was the perfection of style. To prove this he relates a pleasant anecdote. One Caius Rufus carried on a prosecution. Sisenna appeared for the defendant; and, to express his contempt of his adversary, said that many parts of the charge deserved to be spit upon. For this purpose he coined so strange a word, that the prosecutor implored the protection of the judges. "I do not," said he, "understand Sisenna; I am circumvented; I fear that some snare is laid for me. What does he mean by *sputatilica*? I know that *sputa* is spittle: but what is *tilica*?" The court laughed at the oddity of a word so strangely compounded. "Rufio accusante Critilium, Sisenna defendens dixit, quædam ejus *sputatilica* esse crimina. Tum Caius Rufius, 'Circumvenior,' inquit, 'judices, nisi subvenitis. Sisenna quid dicat nescio: metuo insidias. *Sputatilica!* quid est hoc? Sputa quid sit, scio; tilica nescio.' Maximi risus." (De Claris Oratoribus, s. 260.) Whether this was the same Sisenna who is said in the former quotation to have been a correct speaker, does not appear with any degree of certainty.

[3] Varro was universally allowed to be the most learned of the Romans. He wrote on several subjects with profound erudition. Quintilian says, he was completely master of the Latin language, and thoroughly conversant in the antiquities of Greece and Rome. His works will enlarge our sphere of knowledge, but can add nothing to eloquence. (Lib. x. 1.)

glorious distinction of you, my illustrious friends, to ennobl our age with the most refined eloquence. It is with infinit satisfaction, Messala, I observe, that you single out the liv liest models among the ancients for your imitation. You to Maternus, and you, Secundus, so happily unite strength sentiment with beauty of expression; such a pregnancy imagination, such a symmetry of ordonnance distinguish you speeches; so copious or so concise is your elocution, as diff rent occasions require; such gracefulness of style and suc lucid terseness adorn and dignify your compositions: in word, so absolutely you command the passions of your aud ence, and so happily temper your own, that, however th envy and malignity of the present age may withhold tha applause which is so justly your due, posterity will surel speak of you as you well deserve.

24. As soon as Aper had concluded, You see, said Mate nus, the zeal and ardour of our friend: in the cause of th moderns, what a torrent of eloquence! against the ancient what a fund of varied invective! With what genius n alone and spirit, but with what erudition and art too h smites them with weapons borrowed from their own armoury And yet all this vehemence must not deter you, Messal from the performance of your promise. We do not wan a formal defence of the ancients; complimented as we hav been by Aper, not one of us thinks of comparing with thos whom he has run down. He himself is of the same way thinking, though, in imitation of the ancient manner muc practised by your philosophers,[1] he has thought proper t take the wrong side of the question. In answer to his a gument, we do not desire you to expatiate in praise of th ancients: their fame wants no addition. What we request i an investigation of the causes which have produced so rapi a decline from the flourishing state of genuine eloquenc I call it rapid, since, according to Aper's own chronology, th period from the death of Cicero does not exceed one hundre and twenty years.

25. I will pursue the plan you have laid down to m returned Messala. I shall not enter into the question wit

[1] In the Dialogues of Plato and others of the Academic school, th ablest philosophers occasionally supported a wrong hypothesis, i order to provoke a thorough discussion of some important question.

Aper, (who, I think, is the first that ever made it one,) whether those who flourished above a century before us, can properly be styled ancients. I am not disposed to contend about words: let them be called ancients, or ancestors, or whatever other name he pleases, so it be allowed their oratory was superior to ours. I admit too, what he just now advanced, that there are various kinds of eloquence discernible in the same period; much more in different ages. But as among the Attic orators Demosthenes is placed in the first rank, then Æschines, Hyperides next, and after him Lysias and Lycurgus; and their æra is on all hands agreed to have been the prime season of oratory: so amongst us, Cicero is by universal consent preferred to all his contemporaries; whilst after him, Calvus, Asinius, Cæsar, Cælius, and Brutus, are justly acknowledged to have excelled all our preceding or subsequent orators. Nor is it material that they differ in manner, since they agree in kind. Calvus is terse; Asinius more flowing and harmonious; brilliancy of diction is Cæsar's characteristic; caustic bitterness is that of Cælius; Brutus is earnest; copiousness, strength, and vehemence are the predominant qualities in Cicero. Each of them, however, displays an equal soundness of eloquence; so that if you examine their works collectively, you may perceive a certain family likeness in their general tone of thought and method, though variously modified according to their respective peculiarities of genius. That they detracted from each other's merit, and that there are some remaining traces of mutual malignity in their letters, is not to be imputed to them as orators, but as men. Calvus, Asinius, and even Cicero himself, were liable, no doubt, to be infected with envy, hatred, and other human frailties and passions. Brutus alone I except from all imputations of malignity: he, I am persuaded, spoke what he thought in all frankness and singleness of heart; for can it be supposed that he should envy Cicero, who does not seem to have envied even Cæsar himself? As to Galba,[1] Lælius, and some others of the ancients, whom Aper has thought proper to condemn, I need not defend them,

[1] Servius Galba has been already mentioned, c. 18, note. Caius Lælius was consul A. U. C. 614, before the Christian era 140. He was the intimate friend of Scipio, and the patron of Lucilius, the first Roman satirist.

but am willing to admit that they have some defects, which must be ascribed to a growing and yet immature eloquence.

26. After all, if we must relinquish the nobler kind of oratory, and adopt some lower species, I should certainly prefer the impetuosity of Gracchus, or the ripe energy of Crassus, to the effeminate foppery of Mæcenas,[1] or the childish jingle of Gallio;[2] so much rather would I see eloquence clothed in the most rude and negligent garb, than decked out with false colours and meretricious ornament. There is something in our present manner of elocution which is so far from being oratorical, that it is not even manly; and one would imagine our modern pleaders, by their dainty sweet phrases, the inanity of their tuneful periods, and the wanton levity of their whole style, had a view to the stage in all their compositions. Accordingly, some of them are not

[1] The false taste of Mæcenas has been noted by the poets and critics who flourished after his death. His affected prettinesses are compared to the prim curls in which women and effeminate men tricked out their hair. Seneca, who was himself tainted with affectation, has left a beautiful epistle on the very question that makes the main subject of the present Dialogue. He points out the causes of the corrupt taste that debauched the eloquence of those times, and imputes the mischief to the degeneracy of the manners. Whatever the man was, such was the orator. "Talis oratio qualis vita." When ancient discipline relaxed, luxury succeeded, and language became delicate, brilliant, spangled with conceits. Simplicity was laid aside, and quaint expressions grew into fashion. Does the mind sink into languor, the body moves reluctantly. Is the man softened into effeminacy, you see it in his gait. Is he quick and eager, he walks with alacrity. The powers of the understanding are affected in the same manner. Having laid this down as his principle, Seneca proceeds to describe the soft delicacy of Mæcenas, and he finds the same vice in his phraseology. He cites a number of the lady-like terms, which the great patron of letters considered as exquisite beauties. In all this, says he, we see the man who walked the streets of Rome in his open and flowing robe. (Epist. cxiv.) What he has said of Mæcenas is perfectly just. The fopperies of that celebrated minister are in this Dialogue called *calamistri;* an allusion borrowed from Cicero, who praises the beautiful simplicity of Cæsar's Commentaries, and says there were men of a vicious taste, who wanted to apply the curling-iron, that is, to introduce the glitter of conceit and antithesis in the place of truth and nature. (De Claris Orat. s. 262.)

[2] Who Gallio was, is not clearly settled by the commentators. Quintilian (lib. iii. 1) makes mention of Gallio, who wrote a treatise of eloquence; and in the Annals (xv. 73) we find Junius Gallio, the brother of Seneca; but whether either of them is the person here intended, remains uncertain.

ashamed to boast (which one can scarce even mention without a blush) that their speeches are musical enough for the dancer's heel or the warbler's throat.[1] It is this depravity of taste which has given rise to the very indecent and preposterous, though very frequent expression, that such an orator speaks delicately, and such a dancer moves eloquently. I am willing to admit, therefore, that Cassius Severus,[2] (the single modern whom Aper has thought proper to name,) when compared to these his degenerate successors, may justly be deemed an orator; though, it is certain, in the greater part of his compositions there appears far more strength than spirit. He was the first who neglected chastity of style and propriety of method. Inexpert in the use of those very weapons with which he engaged, in his eagerness to attack he generally left himself unguarded; and, to speak plainly, he wrangled, but did not argue. Nevertheless, he is greatly superior, as I observed before, in the variety of his learning, the urbanity

[1] Pliny declares, without ceremony, that he was ashamed of the corrupt effeminate style that disgraced the courts of justice, and made him think of withdrawing from the forum. He calls it sing-song, and says that nothing but musical instruments could be added. (Lib. ii. epist. 14.) The chief aim of Persius in his first satire is levelled against the bad poets of his time, and also the spurious orators, who enervated their eloquence by antithesis, far-fetched metaphors, and points of wit, delivered with the softest tone of voice, and ridiculous airs of affectation.

> Fur es, ait Pedio: Pedius quid? Crimina rasis
> Librat in antithetis; doctus posuisse figuras
> Laudatur. Bellum hoc! hoc bellum! an Romule ceves?
> Men' moveat quippe, et, cantet si naufragus, assem
> Protulerim? Cantas, cum fracta te in trabe pictum
> Ex humero portes?—Persius, Sat. i. 85.

> "Theft, says the accuser, to thy charge I lay,
> O Pedius. What does gentle Pedius say?
> Studious to please the genius of the times,
> With periods, points, and tropes, he slurs his crimes.
> He lards with flourishes his long harangue:
> 'Tis fine, say'st thou. What! to be praised and hang?
> Effeminate Roman! shall such stuff prevail
> To tickle thee, and make thee wag thy tail?
> Say, should a shipwreck'd sailor sing his woe,
> Wouldst thou be moved to pity, and bestow
> An alms? What's more prepost'rous than to see
> A merry beggar? wit in misery!"—Dryden's Persius.

[2] For Cassius Severus, see c. 19, note.

of his wit, and the lustiness of his vigour, to those who succeeded him: not one of whom, however, has Aper ventured to bring into the field. I did imagine, that after having decried Asinius, and Cælius, and Calvus, he would have produced another phalanx of orators; that he would have named several champions, or at least an equal number, to match, man by man, against Cicero, Cæsar, and the rest in succession: on the contrary, he has distinctly and severally censured all the ancients, while he has ventured to commend the moderns in general only. He thought, perhaps, if he singled out some, he should draw upon himself the resentment of all the rest; for among the rhetoricians of the present day, is there one to be found who does not, in his own opinion, tower above Cicero, though he has the modesty to yield to Gabinianus?[1]

27. What Aper has omitted, I intend to perform. I shall produce his moderns by name, to the end that, by placing the example before our eyes, we may be able, more distinctly, to trace the steps by which the vigour of ancient eloquence has fallen to decay.—Maternus interrupted him. To it then, he said, and fulfil your promise. The superiority of the ancients is not in question. We want no proof of it. Upon that point my opinion is decided. But the causes of our rapid decline from ancient excellence remain to be unfolded. You have often turned your thoughts to this subject, as you told us a little while ago, when you certainly spoke in gentler terms, and with less ire against the eloquence of our day, before Aper offended you by mauling your oratorical fathers. —I am not at all offended, returned Messala, with the sentiments which Aper has advanced; neither must you, my friends, take umbrage if anything I may say sounds harshly in your ears, remembering always that it is an established law in debates of this kind, that every man may, with entire security, disclose his unreserved opinion.—Proceed then, replied Maternus, and when you speak of the ancients, do so with the ancient freedom: from which I suspect we have more widely degenerated than even from the ancient eloquence.

[1] Gabinianus was a teacher of rhetoric in the reign of Vespasian. Eusebius, in his Chronicon, eighth of Vespasian, says that Gabinianus, a celebrated rhetorician, was a teacher of eloquence in Gaul. His admirers deemed him another Cicero, and, after him, all such orators were called "Cicerones Gabiniani."

28. Messala resumed his discourse. The causes of the decay of eloquence are by no means difficult to be traced. They are, I believe, well known to you, Maternus, to Secundus, and even to Aper, though I am now, at your request, to expound what we all feel. For is it not obvious that eloquence, with the rest of the polite arts, has lost its former lustre, not for want of men, but through the dissipation of our young men, the inattention of parents, the ignorance of those who pretend to give instruction, and the total neglect of ancient discipline? The mischief began at Rome, it has overrun all Italy, and is now spreading through the provinces. You, however, know more than I of the state of your provinces in this respect, and therefore I shall confine myself to those peculiar and indigenous vices of the capital which beset our youth from their birth, and gather more and more upon them through every season of life. But before I enter on the subject, let me premise a few words on the strict discipline of our ancestors, in educating and training up their children. In the first place the son of every family was the legitimate offspring of a virtuous mother. The infant, as soon as born, was not consigned to the mean dwelling of a hireling nurse, but was reared and cherished in the bosom of its mother, whose highest praise it was to take care of her household affairs, and attend to her children. It was customary likewise for each family to choose some elderly female relation of approved conduct, to whose charge the children were committed. In her presence not one indecent word was uttered; nothing was done against propriety and good manners. The hours of study and serious employment were settled by her direction; and not only so, but even the diversions of the children were conducted with modest reserve and sanctity of manners. Thus it was that Cornelia,[1] the mother of the Gracchi, superintended the education of her illustrious issue.

[1] Cornelia, the mother of the two Gracchi, was daughter to the first Scipio Africanus. "The sons," Quintilian says, "owed much of their eloquence to the care and institutions of their mother, whose taste and learning were fully displayed in her letters, which were then in the hands of the public." (Quint. lib. i. 1.) To the same effect Cicero, De Claris Orat. s. 104. Again, Cicero says, "We have read the letters of Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi, from which it appears, that the sons were educated, not so much in the lap of their mother, as her conversation." (Ibid. s. 211.) Pliny the elder

It was thus that Aurelia trained up Julius Cæsar; and thu Atia formed the mind of Augustus. The consequence of thi regular discipline was, that the young mind, whole and sound and unwarped by irregular passions, received the element of the liberal arts with hearty avidity. Whatever was th peculiar bias, whether to the military art, the study of th laws, or the profession of eloquence, that engrossed the whol attention, that was imbibed thoroughly and totally.

29. In the present age what is our practice? The infan is committed to a Greek chambermaid, and a slave or two chosen for the purpose, generally the worst of the whol household train, and unfit for any office of trust.[1] From th idle tales and gross absurdities of these people, the tende and uninstructed mind is suffered to receive its earliest im pressions. Throughout the house not one servant cares wha he says or does in the presence of his young master;[2] an indeed, how should it be otherwise? since the parents them selves are so far from training their young families to virtu and modesty, that they set them the first examples of luxur and licentiousness. Thus our youth gradually acquire a cor

informs us that a statue was erected to her memory, though Cato th Censor declaimed against showing so much honour to women, even i the provinces. But with all his vehemence he could not prevent it i the city of Rome. (Pliny, lib. xxxiv. 14.)

[1] Quintilian thinks the first elements of education so highly materia that he has two long chapters on the subject. He requires, in the fir place, that the language of the nurses should be pure and correc Their manners are of great importance, but, he adds, let them spea with propriety. It is to them that the infant first attends; he listen and endeavours to imitate them. The first colour imbibed by ya or thread is sure to last. What is bad generally adheres tenacious Let the child, therefore, not learn in his infancy what he must afte wards take pains to unlearn.

[2] Juvenal has one entire satire on the subject of education:—

> Nil dictu fœdum visuque hæc limina tangat,
> Intra quæ puer est. Procul hinc, procul inde puellæ
> Lenonum, et cantus pernoctantis parasiti.
> Maxima debetur puero reverentia.—Sat. xiv. 44.

> "Suffer no lewdness, no indecent speech,
> The apartment of the tender youth to reach.
> Far be from thence the glutton parasite,
> Who sings his drunken catches all the night.
> Boys from their parents may this reverence claim."
>
> Dryden's Juvenal.

rmed habit of impudence, and a total disregard of that everence they owe both to themselves and to others. To say ruth, it seems as if a fondness for horses, actors, and gladitors,[1] the peculiar and distinguishing folly of this our city, as impressed upon them even in the womb: and when once passion of this contemptible sort has seized and engaged ie mind, what opening is there left for the noble arts? Who ilks of anything else in our houses? If we enter the schools, hat other subjects of conversation do we hear among the boys? he preceptors themselves choose no other topic more freuently to entertain their hearers; for it is not by establishing strict discipline, or by giving proofs of their genius, that iis order of men gain pupils, but by fawning and flattery. ot to mention how ill-instructed our youth are in the very

[1] The rage of the Romans for the diversions of the theatre, and iblic spectacles of every kind, is often mentioned by Horace, Juvenal, d other writers under the emperors. Seneca says, that, at one time, ree ways were wanted to as many different theatres: "tribus eodem mpore theatris viæ postulantur." And again, The most illustrious of e Roman youth are no better than slaves to the pantomimic per-mers: "Ostendam nobilissimos juvenes mancipia pantomimorum." pist. 47.) It was for this reason that Petronius lays it down as a rule be observed by the young student, never to list himself in the rties and factions of the theatre:—

Neve plausor in scena
Sedeat redemptus, histrioniæ addictus.

is well known, that theatrical parties distracted the Roman citizens, l rose almost to frenzy. They were distinguished by the *green* l *blue*. Caligula, as we read in Suetonius, attached himself to the mer, and was so fond of the charioteers, who wore green liveries, t he lived for a considerable time in the stables, where their horses re kept. "Prasinæ factioni ita addictus et deditus, ut cœnaret in bulo assidue et maneret." (Life of Caligula, s. 55.) Montesquieu kons such party divisions among the causes that wrought the vnfall of the empire. "Constantinople," he says, "was split into factions, the green and the blue, which owed their origin to the lination of the people to favour one set of charioteers in the circus ıer than another. These two parties raged in every city throughout empire, and their fury rose in proportion to the number of inhaınts. Justinian favoured the blues, who became so elate with le, that they trampled on the laws. All ties of friendship, all ural affection, and all relative duties were extinguished. Whole ilies were destroyed; and the empire was a scene of anarchy and l contention. He who felt himself capable of the most atrocious ds, declared himself a blue, and the greens were massacred with unity."—Montesquieu, Grandeur et Décadence des Romains, ch. xx.

elements of literature, sufficient pains are by no means tak in bringing them acquainted with the best authors, or giving them a proper notion of history, together with a kno ledge of men and things. The whole that seems to be co sidered in their education is, to find out a person for the called a rhetorician. I will presently give you some accou of the introduction of this profession at Rome, and show y with what contempt it was received by our ancestors.

30. At present I must advert to that scheme of discipli which the ancient orators practised. Their unwearied di gence, their habits of meditation, and their constant exercis in every branch of study, are amply displayed in their ov writings. The treatise of Cicero, called "Brutus,"[1] is in our hands. In the latter part of that work, (the former pa is employed in commemorating the ancient orators,) he giv a sketch of the several progressive steps by which he form his eloquence. He there acquaints us, that he studied t civil law under Q. Mucius;[2] that he was instructed in t several branches of philosophy by Philo[3] the Academic, a Diodorus the Stoic; that, not satisfied with attending the le tures of those eminent masters, of whom there were at th

[1] This is the treatise or history of the most eminent orators (Claris Oratoribus), which has been so often cited in the course of th notes. It is also entitled "Brutus," a work replete with the sound criticism, and by its variety and elegance always charming.

[2] Quintus Mucius Scævola was the great lawyer of his time. Cic draws a comparison between him and Crassus. They were b engaged, on opposite sides, in a cause before the *centumviri*. Cras proved himself the best lawyer among the orators of that day, a Scævola the most eloquent of the lawyers. (De Claris Orat. s. 14 During the consulship of Sylla, A. U. C. 666, Cicero being then in nineteenth year of his age, and wishing to acquire a competent kn ledge of the principles of jurisprudence, attached himself to Muc Scævola, who did not undertake the task of instructing pupils, but, conversing freely with all who consulted him, gave a fair opportun to those who thirsted after knowledge. (Ibid. s. 306.)

[3] Philo was a leading philosopher of the Academic school. To av the fury of Mithridates, who waged a long war with the Romans, fled from Athens, and, with some of the most eminent of his fell citizens, repaired to Rome. Cicero was struck with his philosop and became his pupil. (De Claris Orat. s. 306.) Cicero adds, that gave board and lodging, at his own house, to Diodotus the Stoic, a under that master, employed himself in various branches of literatu but particularly in the study of logic, which may be considered a mode of eloquence, contracted, close, and nervous. (Ibid. s. 309.)

ime great numbers in Rome, he made a voyage into Greece nd Asia,[1] in order to enlarge his knowledge, and embrace ıe whole circle of the sciences. Accordingly he appears by is writings to have been familiar with geometry, music, rammar, and every liberal art. He was versed in the subeties of ethics, and the practical lore of moral philosophy. [e had studied the operations of nature, and explored the ıuses of her phenomena. And thus it was, my worthy iends, that from deep learning and the confluence of many ts and universal science, that overflowing and exuberant oquence derived its strength and fulness. For it is not ith the oratorical power and faculty as with others, which 'e exercised within certain precise and determinate limits: ı the contrary, he alone can justly be deemed an orator, ho can speak on every subject gracefully, ornately, and per-asively, in a manner suitable to the dignity of his subject, ıd with pleasure to his hearers.

31. So thought those renowned orators of old. In order, ›wever, to attain these eminent qualifications, they did not

[1] Cicero gives an account of his travels, which he undertook er having employed two years in the business of the forum, where gained an early reputation. At Athens he passed six months with ıtiochus, the principal philosopher of the Old Academy, and, under › direction of that able master, resumed those abstract speculations ich he had cultivated from his earliest youth. Nor did he neglect ı rhetorical exercises. In that pursuit he was assisted by Demetrius › Syrian, who was allowed to be a skilful preceptor. He passed m Greece into Asia; and, in the course of his travels through that ıntry, he lived in constant intercourse with Menippus of Stratonica, a n eminent for his learning; who, if to be neither frivolous nor unin-ligible is the character of Attic eloquence, might fairly be called a dis-le of that school. He met with many other professors of rhetoric, :h as Dionysius of Magnesia, Æschylus of Cnidos, and Xenocles of ramyttium; but, not content with their assistance, he went to Rhodes, l renewed his friendship with Molo, whom he had heard at Rome, l knew to be an able pleader in real causes; a fine writer, and ıdicious critic, who could, with a just discernment of the beauties as ll as the faults of a composition, point out the road to excellence, l improve the taste of his scholars. In his attention to the Roman tor, the point he aimed at (Cicero will not say that he succeeded) ›, to lop away superfluous branches, and confine within its proper nnel a stream of eloquence, too apt to swell above all bounds, and rflow its banks. After two years thus spent in the pursuit of know-ge and improvement in his oratorical profession, Cicero returned to ne almost a new man. (De Claris Orat. s. 315, 316.)

think it necessary to declaim in the schools,[1] and to exercis their tongues and their voices alone upon fictitious contro versies, remote from all reality; but rather to fill their mind with such studies as concern life and manners, as treat o moral good and evil, of justice and injustice, of the decen and the unbecoming in actions, because these constitute th subject matter of the orator; for in the courts of law w generally descant on equity; in deliberations, on moral rect tude; whilst yet these two branches are not so absolutel distinct, but that they are frequently blended with eac other. Now it is impossible to speak on such topics wit fulness, variety, and elegance, unless the orator is perfectl well acquainted with human nature; unless he understand the power and extent of moral duties, the perversity of vic and other things besides, which do not partake either of vic or virtue.

From the same source, likewise, he must derive his in fluence over the passions. He who knows the nature o indignation, will be able to kindle or allay that passion in th breast of the judge; and the advocate who has considere the effect of compassion, and from what secret springs

[1] Quintilian, as well as Seneca, has left a collection of school-decl mations, but he has given his opinion of all such performances. The are mere imitation, and, by consequence, have not the force and spir which a real cause inspires. In public harangues the subject founded in reality; in declamations all is fiction. (Lib. x. 2.) Petroni has given a lively description of the rhetoricians of his time. Th consequence, he says, of their turgid style, and the pompous swell sounding periods, has ever been the same: when their scholars ent the forum, they look as if they were transported into a new worl The teachers of rhetoric have been the bane of all true eloquenc (Petron. in Satyrico, c. 1, 2.) That gay writer, who passed his days luxury and voluptuous pleasures (see his character, Annals, xvi. 18 was, amidst all his dissipation, a man of learning, and, at interval of deep reflection. He knew the value of true philosophy, and, ther fore, directs the young orator to the Socratic school, and to that pla of education which we have before us in the present Dialogue. H bids his scholar begin with Homer, and there drink deep of the Pieri spring: after that, he recommends the moral system; and, when h mind is thus enlarged, he allows him to wield the arms of Demo thenes.

Det primos versibus annos,
Mæoniumque bibat felici pectore fontem:
Mox et Socratico plenus grege mutet habenas
Liber, et ingentis quatiat Demosthenis arma.

flows, will best know how to soften the mind, and melt it into tenderness. It is by these secrets of his art that the orator gains his influence. Whether he has to do with the prejudiced, the angry, the envious, the melancholy, or the timid, he can bridle their various passions, and hold the reins in his own hand. According to the disposition of each, he will apply his skill, and modify his speech, having the needful appliances in readiness for every occasion. Some there are who like best that close mode of oratory, which in a laconic manner states the facts, and forms an immediate conclusion: in that case, it is obvious how necessary it is to be a complete master of the rules of logic. Others admire a more diffuse and level style, illustrated by images drawn from common observation: towards moving such hearers the Peripatetic[1] writers will give him some assistance; and indeed they will, in general, supply him with many useful hints in all the different methods of popular address. The Academics[2]

[1] Cicero has left a book, entitled "Topica," in which he treats at large of the method of finding proper arguments. This, he observes, was executed by Aristotle, whom he pronounces the great master both of invention and judgment. (Ciceronis Topica, s. 6.) The sources from which arguments may be drawn are called *loci communes*, common places. To supply the orator with ample materials, and to render him copious on every subject, was the design of the Greek preceptor, and for that purpose he gave his *topica*. (Cicero, De Oratore.) Aristotle was the most eminent of Plato's scholars: he retired to a gymnasium, or place of exercise, in the neighbourhood of Athens, called the Lyceum, where, from a custom which he and his followers observed, of discussing points of philosophy as they walked in the porticos of the place, they obtained the name of Peripatetics, or the walking philosophers. (See Middleton's Life of Cicero, vol. ii. p. 537, 4to edit.)

[2] The Academic sect derived its origin from Socrates, and its name from a celebrated gymnasium, or place of exercise, in the suburbs of Athens, called the Academy, after Academus, who possessed it in the time of the Tyndaridæ. It was afterwards purchased, and dedicated to the public, for the convenience of walks and exercises for the citizens of Athens. It was gradually improved with plantations, groves, and porticos for the particular use of the professors or masters of the Academic school, where several of them are said to have spent their lives, and to have resided so strictly, as scarce ever to have come within the city. (See Middleton's Life of Cicero, 4to edit. vol. ii. p. 536.) Plato and his followers continued to reside in the porticos of the Academy. They chose

> "The green retreats
> Of Academus, and the thymy vale,
> Where, oft enchanted with Socratic sounds,
> Ilissus pure devolved his tuneful stream
> In gentle murmurs."—Akenside, Pleas. of Imag.

(For

will inspire him with a becoming warmth: Plato will gi
him loftiness, Xenophon suavity. Even the exclamato
manner of Epicurus,[1] or Metrodorus, may be found, in so
circumstances, not altogether unserviceable. For take no
that I am not laying down rules for building up an imagina
wise man, or a city of the Stoics, but for accomplishing one w
ought not to confine his attention to any one sect, but gath
freely from all. Accordingly, the ancient orators not on
studied the civil laws, but also grammar, poetry, music, a
geometry. Indeed, there are few causes (perhaps I mig
justly say there are none) wherein a skill in the first
not absolutely necessary; and there are many in which
acquaintance with the last-mentioned sciences is high
requisite.

32. Let no one object to me that "eloquence is the sing

For dexterity in argument, the orator is referred to this school, for t
reason given by Quintilian, who says that the custom of supporting
argument on either side of the question, approaches nearest to t
orator's practice in forensic causes. (Lib. xii. 2.) Quintilian assures
that we are indebted to the Academic philosophy for the ablest orato
and it is to that school that Horace sends his poet for instruction:—

Rem tibi Socraticæ poterunt ostendere chartæ,
Verbaque provisam rem non invita sequentur.—Ars Poet. 31

"Good sense, that fountain of the muse's art,
Let the rich page of Socrates impart;
And if the mind with clear conception glow,
The willing words in just expressions flow."—Francis's Horac

[1] Epicurus made frequent use of the rhetorical figure called exc
mation; and in his life, by Diogenes Laertius, we find a variety
instances. It is for that manner of giving animation to a discou
that Epicurus is mentioned in the Dialogue. For the rest, Quintili
tells us what to think of him. Epicurus, he says, dismisses the ora
from his school, since he advises his pupil to pay no regard to scien
or to method. (Lib. xii. 2.) Metrodorus was the favourite disci
of Epicurus. Brotier says that a statue of the master and t
scholar, with their heads joined together, was found at Rome in t
year 1743.

It is worthy of notice, that except the Stoics, who, without aiming
elegance of language, argued closely and with vigour, Quintilian p
scribes the remaining sects of philosophers. Aristippus, he sa
placed his *summum bonum* in bodily pleasure, and therefore could
no friend to the strict regimen of the accomplished orator. Much le
could Pyrrho be of use, since he doubted whether there was any su
thing in existence as the judges before whom the cause must
pleaded. To him the party accused, and the senate, were alike no
entities. (Quintil. lib. xii. 2.)

ience requisite for the orator; an occasional recourse to the thers will be sufficient for all his purposes;" I answer, in ie first place, there will always be a remarkable difference in ie manner of applying what we take up, as it were, upon an, and what we properly possess; so that it will ever be anifest, whether the orator is indebted to others for what he roduces, or derives it from his own unborrowed fund. And, i the next, the sciences throw an inexpressible grace over our mpositions, even where they are not immediately concerned; i their effects are discernible where we least expect to find iem. This powerful charm is not only distinguished by the arned and the judicious, but strikes even the most common id popular class of auditors; insomuch that one may freiently hear them applauding a speaker of this improved nd, as a man of genuine erudition; as enriched with the hole treasures of eloquence; and, in one word, a complete ator. But no man, I affirm, ever did, or ever can, maintain that exalted character, unless, like the soldier marching battle, armed at all points, he enters the forum equipped ith the whole panoply of knowledge. So much, however, is is principle neglected by our modern professors of oratory, at their pleadings are debased by the vilest colloquial barrisms; they are ignorant of the laws, unacquainted with ie acts of the senate; the common law of Rome they prossedly ridicule, and philosophy they seem to regard as someing that ought to be shunned and dreaded. Thus eloquence, e a dethroned potentate, is banished her rightful dominions, id confined to barren points and low conceits: and she who as once mistress of the whole circle of sciences, and charmed ery beholder with the goodly appearance of her glorious ain, is now shorn and curtailed, stripped of all her honours, l her attendants, (I had almost said of all her genius,) and taken up as one of the meanest of the mechanic arts. his, therefore, I consider as the first, and the principal ason of our having so greatly declined from the spirit of ie ancients.

If I were called upon to support my opinion by authoties, might I not justly name, among the Grecians, Demosenes? who, we are informed, constantly attended the ctures of Plato: so also, among our own countrymen, Cicero mself assures us, (and in these very words, if I rightly

remember,) that he owed whatever advances he had ma in eloquence, not to the rhetoricians, but to the Academ philosophers.

Other and very considerable reasons might be produc for the decay of eloquence. But I leave them, my frien as it is proper I should, to be mentioned by you; havi performed my share in the examination of this question, a with a freedom which will give, I imagine, as usual, mu offence. I am sure, at least, if certain of our contemporari were to be informed of what I have here maintained, I shou be told, that in laying it down as a maxim, that a knowled both of law and philosophy are essential qualifications in orator, I have been fondly pursuing a phantom of my o imagination.

33. I am so far from thinking, replied Maternus, th you have completed the part you undertook, that I shou rather imagine you had only given us the first general sket of your design. You have marked out to us, indeed, tho sciences wherein the ancient orators were instructed, a have placed in strong contrast their successful industry wi our sloth and ignorance. But something further still mains; and as you have shown us what was the vastness their knowledge, and the littleness of our own, I would ha you acquaint us also with the particular exercises by whi the youth of those earlier days were wont to strengthen a improve their genius. For I think you will not deny th oratory is acquired by practice far better than by precep and our friends here seem, by their countenances, to imply much.

Aper and Secundus having signified their assent, Messa resumed his discourse as follows:

Having then, as it should seem, disclosed to your sat faction the seeds and first principles of ancient eloquence, specifying the several studies in which the ancient orato were trained; I shall now lay before you the practical exe cises they pursued, in order to gain a facility in the exerti of eloquence. Note, however, that the very act of studyi implies practice; for it is impossible to acquire knowledge various and recondite, without knowledge leading to reflectio reflection to grasp and command of thought, and this to rea power of utterance. Thus it appears that to learn what y

ıall deliver, and to be able to deliver what you have learned, :e in principle one and the same. But if in this I appear) any one to speculate too abstrusely; if any one insist on parating knowledge from practice, at least he will not deny ıat a mind filled with manifold instruction will enter with so uch the more advantage upon those exercises peculiar to the atorical circus.

34. The practice of our ancestors was agreeable to this eory. The youth who was intended for public declamation, ıs introduced by his father, or some near relation, with all e advantages of home discipline and a mind furnished with eful knowledge, to the most eminent orator of the time, whom enceforth he attended upon all occasions; he listened with tention to his patron's pleadings in the tribunals of justice, .d his public harangues before the people; he heard him in e warmth of argument; he noted his sudden replies; and us, in the field of battle, if I may so express myself, he ırned the first rudiments of rhetorical warfare. The advan- ges of this method are obvious: the young candidate gained urage, and improved his judgment; he studied in open day, nidst the heat of the conflict, where nothing weak or idle uld be said with impunity; where everything absurd was ıtantly rebuked by the judge, exposed to ridicule by the versary, and condemned by the whole body of advocates.

this way they imbibed at once the pure and uncorrupted eams of genuine eloquence. But though they chiefly at- hed themselves to one particular orator, they heard like- se all the rest of their contemporary pleaders, in many of ir respective debates; and they had an opportunity of ıuainting themselves with the various sentiments of the ople, and of observing what pleased or disgusted them most the several orators of the forum. Thus they were supplied h an instructor of the best and most improving kind, ex- ıiting, not the feigned semblance of Eloquence, but her real l lively manifestation: not a pretended, but a genuine adver- y, armed in earnest for the combat; an audience, ever full l ever new, composed of foes as well as friends, and where ; a single expression could fall uncensured, or unapplauded. r you are aware that a solid and lasting reputation of elo- ence must be acquired by the censure of our enemies, as ll as by the applause of our friends; or rather, indeed, it is

from the former that it derives its surest and most unquestion strength and firmness. Under such a schooling, the you of whom we are speaking, a disciple of all the orators; attentive hearer of all judicial proceedings; instructed by t experience of others; daily conversant with the laws of country; familiar with the faces of the judges, and the aspe of a full audience; and well acquainted with the popular tas —might be called on to conduct a prosecution or a defen and was equal to cope, single handed, with the difficulties his task. Crassus, at the age of nineteen,[1] Cæsar at twent one, Pollio at twenty-two, and Calvus when he was but a f years older, pronounced those several speeches against Carb Dolabella, Cato, and Vatinius, which we read to this ho with admiration.

35. On the other hand, our modern youth[2] are sent to t mountebank schools of certain declaimers called rhetoricia a sét of men who made their first appearance in Rome a lit before the time of Cicero. And that they were by no mea approved by our ancestors, plainly appears from their bei enjoined, under the censorship of Crassus and Domitius,[3] shut up their *schools of impudence*, as Cicero expresses But I was going to say, our youths are sent to certain a

[1] There is in this place a trifling mistake, either in Messala, t speaker, or in the copyists. Crassus was born A. U. C. 614. (See c. note.) Papirius Carbo, the person accused, was consul, A. U. C. 634, a the prosecution was in the following year, when Crassus expres says, that he was then only one-and-twenty. (De Orat. lib. iii. 7 Pliny the consul was another instance of early pleading. He s himself, that he began his career in the forum at the age of ninete and, after long practice, he could only see the functions of an orator it were in a mist. (Lib. v. epist. 8.) Quintilian relates of Cæsar, Calv and Pollio, that they all three appeared at the bar, long before th arrived at their quæstorian age, which was seven-and-twenty.

[2] Lipsius, in his note on this passage, says, that he once thought t word *scena* in the text ought to be changed to *schola;* but he aft wards saw his mistake. The place of fictitious declamation and spuric eloquence, where the teachers played a ridiculous part, was prope called a theatrical scene.

[3] Lucius Licinius Crassus and Domitius Ænobarbus were cens A. U. C. 662. Aulus Gellius mentions a former expulsion of the rhe ricians, by a decree of the senate, in the consulship of Fannius Stra and Valerius Messala, A. U. C. 593. He gives the words of the decr and also of the edict, by which the teachers were banished by Cras several years after. See A. Gellius, Noctes Atticæ, lib. xv. 2. S also Suetonius, De Claris Rhet. s. 1.

emies, where it is hard to determine whether the place, the ompany, or the method of instruction is most likely to infect ie minds of young people, and produce a wrong turn of ought. There can be nothing to inspire respect in a place here all who enter it are of the same low degree of under-anding; nor any advantage to be received from their fellow-udents, where a parcel of boys and raw youths of unripe dgments harangue before each other, without the least fear danger of criticism. And as for their exercises, they are diculous in their very nature. They consist of two kinds, id are either persuasive or controversial. The first, as being sier and requiring less skill, is assigned to the younger lads; ie other is the task of more mature years. But, good gods! ith what incredible absurdity are they composed! And this a matter of course, for the style of the declamations must eds accord with the preposterous nature of the subjects. hus being taught to harangue[1] in a most pompous diction, the rewards due to tyrannicides, on the election to be

[1] Seneca has left a collection of declamations in the two kinds, viz. e persuasive and controversial. (See his Suasoriæ and Controversiæ.) the first class, the questions are, Whether Alexander should attempt e Indian Ocean? Whether he should enter Babylon when the augurs nounced impending danger? Whether Cicero, to appease the wrath Mark Antony, should burn all his works? The subjects in the ond class are more complex. A priestess was taken prisoner by a nd of pirates and sold to slavery. The purchaser abandoned her to ostitution. Her person being rendered venal, a soldier made his ers of gallantry. She desired the price of her prostituted charms; t the military man resolved to use force and insolence, and she bbed him in the attempt. For this she was prosecuted, and quitted. She then desired to be restored to her rank of priestess: at point was decided against her. These instances may serve as specimen of the trifling declamations, into which such a man as neca was betrayed by his own imagination. Petronius has described e literary farce of the schools. "Young men," he says, "were there ined up in folly, neither seeing nor hearing anything that could be use in the business of life. They were taught to think of nothing t pirates loaded with fetters on the sea-shore; tyrants by their icts commanding sons to murder their fathers; the responses of acles demanding a sacrifice of three or more virgins, in order to ate an epidemic pestilence. All these discourses, void of common se, are tricked out in the gaudy colours of exquisite eloquence, t, sweet, and seasoned to the palate. In this ridiculous boy's play e scholars trifle away their time; they are laughed at in the forum, d still worse, what they learn in their youth they do not forget at advanced age. (Petron. in Satyrico, c. 3, 4.)

made by deflowered virgins,[1] on the licentiousness of marr
women, on the ceremonies to be observed in times of pes
lence, with other topics, which are daily debated in the scho
and scarce ever in the forum; when they come before t
real judges * * *.[2]

36. * * * The spirit of genuine eloquence is kept ali
like a flame, by fresh materials, is excited by agitation, a
grows brighter as it burns. The same causes produced t
same effect at Rome, and sped the fire of oratory among c
ancestors; for though our modern orators have achieved
much as was possible in a settled, peaceable, and happy stat
yet their predecessors had manifestly a wider scope in tim
of turbulence and licence, when all was promiscuous confusi
uncontrolled by a single moderator, and when he was deem
the ablest orator, who had most influence over a restless a
ungoverned multitude. Thence came incessant multiplicati
of laws, promoted by popular cries; thence those harangues
the magistrates prolonged almost to midnight, those impeac
ments of the great, those factions of the nobles, those he
ditary enmities in particular families; and, in fine, those i
cessant struggles between the senate and the commons;
which, though they convulsed the state, yet certainly cont
buted to produce and encourage that rich vein of eloquen
which discovered itself in those tempestuous days. The mo
a man signalized himself by his abilities in this art, so mu
the more easily he opened his road to preferment, and mai
tained an ascendant over his colleagues, at the same time th
it heightened his interest with the nobles, his authority wi
the senate, and his reputation with the people in gener
The patronage of these admired orators was courted even

[1] It was one of the questions usually debated in these rheto
schools, whether the woman who had been ravished should choose
marry the violator of her chastity, or rather have him put to death.

[2] Here unfortunately begins a chasm in the original. The wo
are, "Cum ad veros judices ventum est, ... rem cogitare . .
nihil humile, nihil abjectum eloqui poterat." This is unintelligib
What follows from the words, "magna eloquentia sicut flamma," p
pably belongs to Maternus, who is the last speaker in the Dialog
The chasm, however, is probably not so great as many commentato
have supposed; for according to Ritter and Doederlein, the comm
notion that Secundus took an active part in this discussion, is
tenable, as appears from the conclusion of the Dialogue; which see.

reign nations;[1] magistrates, setting out for the provinces, ok care to show them the highest marks of honour, and as ıdiously cultivated their friendship at their return. Prætor- ips and consulships were bestowed on them without any licitation on their own part. Nor were they even in a private ıtion without great power, as their advice and influence ayed both the senate and the people. The truth is, it was established maxim in those days, that, without eloquence, man could either acquire or maintain any high position in ə state. And no wonder, indeed, that such notions should iversally prevail; since men so distinguished were forced, ıether they would or not, to appear before the people;[2] since was not sufficient merely to vote in the senate, without sup- rting that vote with good sense and eloquence; since in all blic impeachments or civil causes, the accused was obliged answer to the charge in his own person; since written ɔositions were not admitted in state trials, but the witnesses re called upon to deliver their evidence in open court. us our ancestors were eloquent, as much by urgent necessity by splendid encouragements. To be possessed of the power speech, was esteemed the highest glory; whilst the man o had no tongue was held in contempt. Thus they were ited to the pursuit of oratory, no less by the dread of .me than by views of interest, lest they should be classed her as clients than as patrons; lest they should lose de- ıdents whom their ancestors had transmitted to them, and them mix in the train of others; in fine, lest being looked ɔn as men of mean abilities, they should either fail to ain high offices, or hold them by a precarious tenure.

The colonies, the provinces, and the nations that submitted to the nan arms, had their patrons in the capital, whom they courted with duity. It was this mark of distinction that raised the ambitious ɜen to the first honours in the state. To have a number of clients, ɜell at home as in the most important colonies, was the unremit- ; desire, the study and constant labour of all who aimed at pre- nence; insomuch that, in the time of the old republic, the men ɔ wished to be distinguished patrons, impoverished, and often ıed their families, by their profusion and magnificence. They paid rt to the common people, to the provinces, and states in alliance ı Rome; and, in their turn, they received the homage of their ıts. See Annals, iii. 55.

Forced, that is, by the tribunes of the people. Thus Cicero was luced by Apuleius, in the consulship of Antony, and delivered his h Philippic against him.

37. I know not whether those ancient historical pieces, which were lately collected and published by Mucianus,[1] from the old libraries where they have hitherto been preserved, have yet fallen into your hands. This collection consists of eleven volumes of the public journals, and three of epistles; by which it appears that Pompey and Crassus[2] gained as much advantage from their eloquence as their arms; that Lucullus, Metellus, Lentulus, Curio,[3] and the rest of those distinguished

[1] Suetonius relates that Vespasian, having undertaken to restore three thousand brazen plates, which had perished in the conflagration of the capitol (see Hist. iii. 71), ordered a diligent search to be made for copies, and thereby furnished the government with a collection of curious and ancient records, containing the decrees of the senate, acts of the commons, and treaties of alliance, almost from the building of the city. (Suetonius, Life of Vespasian, s. 8.) This, with the addition of speeches and letters composed by men of eminence, was, most probably, the collection published by Mucianus. We may be sure that it contained a fund of information, and curious materials for history, but the whole is unfortunately lost.

[2] The person intended in this place must not be confounded with Lucius Crassus, the orator celebrated by Cicero in the dialogue De Oratore. What is here said relates to Marcus Crassus, who was joined in the triumvirate with Pompey and Cæsar; a man famous for his riches, his avarice, and his misfortunes. While Cæsar was engaged in Gaul, and Pompey in Spain, Crassus invaded Asia, where, in a battle with the Parthians, his whole army was cut to pieces. He himself was in danger of being taken prisoner, but he fell by the sword of the enemy. His head was cut off, and carried to Orodes, the Parthian king, who ordered liquid gold to be infused into his mouth, that he who thirsted for gold might be glutted with it after his death. (Cicero, De Claris Oratoribus, s. 233.)

[3] Lentulus succeeded more by his action than by real ability. With a quick and animated countenance, he was not a man of penetration; though fluent in speech, he had no command of words. His voice was sweet and melodious; his action graceful; and with those advantages he was able to conceal all other defects. (Cicero, De Claris Oratoribus, s. 234.) Metellus, Lucullus, and Curio are mentioned by Cicero in the same work. Curio was a senator of great spirit and popularity. He exerted himself with zeal and ardour for the legal constitution and the liberties of his country against the ambition of Julius Cæsar, but afterwards sold himself to that artful politician, and favoured his designs. The calamities that followed are by the best historians laid to his charge. Lucan says of him,—

'Audax venali comitatur Curio lingua;
Vox quondam populi, libertatemque tueri
Ausus, et armatos plebi miscere potentes.—Phars. lib. i. 269.

And again,—

Momentumque fuit mutatus Curio rerum,
Gallorum captus spoliis, et Cæsaris auro.—Lib. iv. 849.

iefs, devoted themselves with great application to this insi-
iating art; in a word, that not a single person in those times
se to any considerable degree of power, without the assist-
ce of the rhetorical talents. To these considerations may
further added, that the dignity and importance of the
bates in which the ancients were engaged, contributed
eatly to advance their eloquence. A vast difference, indeed,
makes, whether the orator is to harangue only upon some
fling robbery, or a little paltry form of pleading; or upon
ch topics as bribery at elections, the oppression of our allies,
the massacre of our fellow-citizens. Evils these, which,
yond all peradventure, it were better should never happen;
d we have reason to rejoice that we live under a government
iere we are strangers to such terrible calamities: still it
ist be acknowledged, that wherever they did happen, they
re wonderful incentives to eloquence. For the orator's
nius rises and expands in proportion to the dignity of the
asion upon which it is exerted; and no magnificent speech
s ever yet delivered except upon a subject of adequate im-
rtance. Thus the speeches of Demosthenes against his
ardians[1] scarcely, I imagine, established his character; nor
s it the defence of Archias, or of Quinctius, that acquired
Cicero the reputation of a consummate orator. It was
tiline, and Milo, and Verres, and Mark Antony, that in-
ited him with his unequalled fame. Far am I from insi-
iating, that such infamous characters deserve to be tolerated
a state, in order to supply convenient matter of oratory:
I contend for is, that this art flourishes to most advantage
turbulent times. Peace, no doubt, is infinitely preferable
war; but it is the latter only that forms the soldier. It is
t the same with Eloquence: the oftener she enters, if I
y so say, the field of battle, the more wounds she gives

[1] Demosthenes, when not more than seven years old, lost his father, was left under the care of three guardians, who thought an orphan ful prey, and did not scruple to embezzle his effects. In the mean-e, Demosthenes pursued a plan of education without the aid or ice of his tutors. He became the scholar of Isocrates, and he was hearer of Plato. Under those masters his progress was such, that the age of seventeen he was able to conduct a suit against his rdians. The young orator succeeded so well in that prelude to his ire fame, that the plunderers of the orphan's portion were con-ined to refund a large sum. It is said that Demosthenes, after-ds, released the whole or the greatest part.

and receives, the more powerful the adversary with whc she contends, so much the more ennobled she appears in t eyes of mankind, whose nature it is to look distastefully what is tame and placid.

38. I proceed to another advantage of the ancient forun I mean the form of proceeding and the rules of practice o served in those days. Our modern custom is, I grant, mo conducive to truth and justice; but that of former times ga to eloquence a free career, and by consequence, greater weigl and splendour. The advocate was not, as now, confined to few hours;[1] he might adjourn as often as it suited his conv nience; he might expatiate, as his genius prompted him: ar the number of days, like that of the several patrons, was unl mited. Pompey, in his third consulship,[2] was the first wh gave a check to eloquence, and, as it were, bridled its spiri but still he left all causes to be tried according to law in th forum, and before the prætors. The importance of th business, which was decided in that court of justice, will b evident, if we compare it with the transactions before th centumvirs,[3] who at present have cognisance of all matte

[1] The rule for allowing a limited space of time for the hearing causes, the extent of which could not be known, began, as Pliny th younger informs us, under the emperors, and was fully established f the reasons which he gives. The custom, he says, of allowing tw water-glasses (*i. e.* two hour-glasses), or only one, and sometimes ha a one, prevailed, because the advocates grew tired before the busine was explained, and the judges were ready to decide before they unde stood the question. Pliny, with some indignation, asks, "Are we wis than our ancestors? are the laws more just at present? Our ancesto allowed many hours, many days, and many adjournments, in ever cause; and for my part, as often as I sit in judgment, I allow as muc time as the advocate requires; for would it not be rashness to gue what space of time is necessary in a cause which has not been opened But some unnecessary things may be said; and is it not better tha what is unnecessary should be spoken, than that what is necessar should be omitted? And who can tell what is necessary till he ha heard? Patience in a judge ought to be considered as one of the chie branches of his duty, as it certainly is of justice." See Plin. lib. vi. ep. 2

[2] Pompey's third consulship was A. U. C. 702, B. C. 52. He was a first sole consul, and in six or seven months Metellus Scipio becam his colleague.

[3] The centumviri, as mentioned c. 7, note, were a body of men com posed of three out of every tribe, for the decision of such matters a the prætors referred to their judgment. The nature of the severa causes that came before that judicature may be seen in the first bool De Oratore.

hatever. We have not so much as one oration of Cicero or æsar, of Brutus, Cælius, or Calvus, or any other person mous for his eloquence, which was delivered before the last-ientioned jurisdiction, excepting only the speeches of Asinius ollio[1] for the heirs of Urbinia. But those speeches were elivered about the middle of the reign of Augustus, when, ter a long peace with foreign nations, and a profound tran-uillity at home, that wise and politic prince had conquered l opposition, and not only triumphed over party and faction, it subdued eloquence itself.

39. What I am going to say will appear, perhaps, too inute; it may border on the ridiculous, and excite your irth: with all my heart; I will hazard it for that very ason. The dress now in use at the bar has an air of mean-ess: the speaker is confined in a close robe,[2] and loses all e grace of action. The very courts of judicature are another jection; all causes are heard, at present, in little narrow oms, where spirit and strenuous exertion are unnecessary. ne orator, like a generous steed, requires liberty and ample ace: before a scanty tribunal his spirit droops, and the dness of the scene damps the powers of genius. Add to is, we pay no attention to style; and indeed how should we? o time is allowed for the beauties of composition: the judge lls upon you to begin, and you must obey, liable at the me time to frequent interruptions, while documents are ad, and witnesses examined. Two or three stragglers are esent, and to them the whole business seems to be trans-

[1] The question in this cause before the centumviri was, whether Asinius Figulus, the son of Urbinia, fled from his post in battle, and, ng taken prisoner, remained in captivity during a length of time, he made his escape into Italy; or, as was contended by Asinius llio, whether the defendant did not serve under two masters, who actised physic, and, being discharged by them, voluntarily sell him-f as a slave? See Quintilian, lib. vii. 2.

[2] The advocates at that time wore a tight cloak, or mantle, like that ich the Romans used on a journey. Cicero, in his oration for Milo, ques that he who wore that inconvenient dress was not likely to have med a design against the life of any man. A travelling-cloak could e neither grace nor dignity to an orator at the bar. The business s transacted in a kind of chat with the judges; what room for quence, and that commanding action which springs from the otions of the soul, and inflames every breast with kindred passions? e cold inanimate orator is described by Quintilian, speaking with hand under his robe; "manum intra pallium continens."

acted in solitude. But the orator requires a different scen
He delights in clamour, tumult, and bursts of applaus
Eloquence must have her theatre, as was the case in ancie
times, when the forum was crowded with the first men
Rome; when a numerous train of clients, the people in the
several tribes, and ambassadors from the colonies and a gre
part of Italy, attended to hear the debate; in short, when a
Rome was interested in the event. We know that in th
cases of Cornelius, Scaurus, Milo, Bestia, and Vatinius, th
concourse was so great, that those several causes were trie
before the whole body of the people. A scene so vast an
magnificent was enough to inflame the most languid orato
The speeches delivered upon those occasions are in everybody
hands, and, by these above all others, we of this day estima
the genius of the respective authors.

40. If we now consider the frequent assemblies of th
people, and the right of prosecuting the most eminent men
the state; if we reflect on the glory that sprung from th
declared hostility of the most illustrious characters; if w
recollect, that even Scipio, Sylla, and Pompey were not she
tered from the storms of eloquence; that the malignity of th
human heart, always adverse to superior characters, enco
raged the orator to persist; that the very players, by sarcast
allusions to men in power, gratified the public ear,—what
number of causes shall we see conspiring to rouse the spirit
the ancient forum! I am not speaking now of that temperat
faculty which delights in quiet times, supported by its ow
integrity, and the virtues of moderation. I speak of th
great and notable eloquence, the offspring of that licentiou
ness, to which fools have given the name of liberty: I spe

[1] Maternus is now drawing to a conclusion, and therefore calls
mind the proposition with which he set out, viz. that the flame
oratory is kept alive by fresh materials, and always blazes forth
times of danger and public commotion. The unimpassioned sty
which suited the Areopagus of Athens, or the courts of Rome, whe
the advocate spoke by an hour-glass, does not deserve the name
genuine eloquence. The orations of Cicero for Marcellus, Ligarius, a
king Deiotarus, were spoken before Cæsar, when he was master of t
Roman world. In those speeches, what have we to admire, exce
delicacy of sentiment, and elegance of diction? How different fro
the torrent, tempest, and whirlwind of passion that roused, inflam
and commanded the senate and the people against Catiline and Ma
Antony!

bold and turbulent oratory, that inflamer of the people, d constant companion of sedition; that fierce incendiary, at knows no compliance, and scorns to temporize; busy, sh, and arrogant, but, in quiet and well-regulated governents, utterly unknown. Who ever heard of an orator at ete or Lacedæmon? In those states a system of rigorous cipline and rigorous laws were established. Macedonian d Persian eloquence are equally unknown. The same may said of every country, where the plan of government was ed and uniform. Rhodes and Athens (places of popular le, where all things lay open to all men) swarmed with tors innumerable. In the same manner, Rome, while she s under no settled policy; while she was torn with parties, sensions, and factions; while there was no peace in the um, no harmony in the senate, no moderation in the judges; ile there was neither reverence paid to superiors, nor bounds scribed to magistrates,—Rome, under these circumstances, duced, beyond all dispute, a stronger and brighter vein of quence; as in the wild uncultivated field certain plants l flourish with uncommon vigour. But the tongue of the cchi did nowise compensate the republic for their seditious s; nor the superior eloquence of Cicero make him any ends for his sad catastrophe.

1. So too our modern forum (that single relic which survives of ancient oratory) gives proof that all things the state are not even yet conducted in that perfectly l-ordered manner one could wish. For, tell me, is it not guilty or the miserable alone, who fly to us for assistance? en any community implores our protection, is it not be- e it either is insulted by some neighbouring state, or by domestic feuds? And what province ever seeks our onage, till she has been plundered or oppressed? But better it surely is, never to have been injured, than last to be redressed. If there was a government in world free from commotions and disturbances, the pro- on of oratory would there be as useless, as that of medicine e sound: and as the physician would have little practice rofit among the healthy and the strong, so neither would orator have much business or honour where obedience good manners universally prevail. To what purpose studied speeches in a senate, where the better and the

major part of the assembly are already of one mind? What the expediency of haranguing the populace, where public affairs are not determined by the voice of an ignorant and giddy multitude, but by the steady wisdom of a single person? To what end voluntary informations, where crimes are unfrequent and inconsiderable? or of laboured and invidious defences, where the clemency of the judge is ever on the side of the accused? Believe me then, my worthy (and, as far as the circumstances of the age require, my eloquent) friends, had the gods reversed the date of your existence, and placed you in the times of those ancients we so much admire, and them in yours; you would not have fallen short of that glorious spirit which distinguished their oratory, nor would they have been destitute of a proper temperance and moderation. But since a high reputation for eloquence is not consistent with great repose in the public, let every age enjoy its own peculiar advantages, without derogating from those of a former.

42. Maternus having ended, Messala observed, that some of the points which his friend had laid down, were not perfectly agreeable to his sentiments; and there were others, which he wished to hear explained more at large: but the time is now, said he, too far advanced.—If I have maintained anything, replied Maternus, which seems to require explanation, I shall be ready to clear it up in some future conference: at the same time, rising from his seat and embracing Aper; Messala and I (continued he smiling) shall arraign you, be well assured, before the poets and admirers of the ancients.—And I both of you (returned Aper) before the rhetoricians.[1] Thus we parted in mutual good-humour.

[1] Only three speakers are here mentioned, Maternus, Messala, and Aper, whence Ritter infers with great probability that Secundus took no direct part in the controversy.